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# The Bryn Mawr Hotel: The Relationship Between the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad and the Nineteenth-Century Railroad Resort Hotel

Alison Janet Reed  
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# The Bryn Mawr Hotel: The Relationship Between the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad and the Nineteenth-Century Railroad Resort Hotel

## **Disciplines**

Historic Preservation and Conservation

## **Comments**

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THE BRYN MAWR HOTEL:  
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE MAIN LINE  
OF THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD  
AND THE  
NINETEENTH-CENTURY RAILROAD RESORT HOTEL

Alison Janet Reed

A THESIS

in

The Graduate Program in Historic Preservation

Presented to the faculties of the University of  
Pennsylvania in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

1989

Christa Wilmanns-Wells  
Christa Wilmanns-Wells, Lecturer, Historic  
Preservation, Advisor

David G. De Long  
David G. De Long, Graduate Group Chairman  
and Reader



## Acknowledgements

I can do all things in him who strengthens me.

Phillipians 4:13

These words and the strength which they imparted helped to sustain me during my years in graduate school and in the writing of this paper. This paper is dedicated to the glory of God and also to my parents,

Mr. and Mrs. Harrison David Reed.



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William B. Sipes, The Pennsylvania Railroad  
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## Preface

The inspiration for the subject matter of this thesis came from several sources. My first exposure to the subject was through a course which I took while enrolled in the Historic Preservation graduate program at the University of Pennsylvania entitled "The Common American Landscape." Initially I possessed very little knowledge of what "the common American landscape" even implied, but my interest and intrigue with the concept grew during the course of the semester. Impressed upon me by my professor as well as by readings of authors John R. Stilgoe and John Brinckerhoff Jackson was the realization of the profound impact which the railroad industry had on various aspects of the development of the American landscape in the nineteenth century. Thus stimulated I embarked on a cross-country journey by rail during the ensuing summer in order to experience for myself the American landscape, or portions thereof, through the windows of the fast-moving train.

Although unable to stay at any resort hotels en route myself, my budding interest in American railroads merged with my pre-existing interest in the hospitality industry (in the form of hotels, taverns and restaurants) to impel me to explore the fascinating concept of the nineteenth-



century railroad resort hotel. The personal discovery that there was such an artifact, the old Bryn Mawr Hotel building, still in existence and located near my hometown encouraged me to explore further the development and characteristics of this type of architecture.

Searching for primary documentation regarding the "first" and the "second" Bryn Mawr Hotel was often difficult. In addition, there was a significant amount of misinformation in the secondary sources concerning the subject, and the material that had been published was sketchy indeed. To my dismay, I found that the collective memory of the local inhabitants of the Main Line area concerning the Bryn Mawr Hotel in either of its forms is far short of what one would expect it to be. Since The Baldwin School, a private preparatory school for girls, has occupied the second hotel building for more than seventy-five years, it is somewhat understandable that the history of the current institution occupying the building should be uppermost in the collective memory of the institution itself as well as of the surrounding community. However, the origins of both the present structure and its predecessor as a country resort hotel should not be forgotten, especially when such beginnings were so instrumental in fostering the development of the community of Bryn Mawr from its rural beginnings as



Humphreysville.

Recently at a funeral I attended, it was emphasized that our memories are the most essential and unique attributes which we as human beings possess and that they should be cherished always. It seems to me that this should be the case with the memory of the Bryn Mawr Hotel as an integral part of the history and landscape of Bryn Mawr. In addition, Robert A. M. Stern stated, "the architecture of our resorts has provided us with the most public expressions of our collective identity."<sup>1</sup> The citizens of Bryn Mawr might heed this, lest the memories of its origins as a country resort area and, especially, the memories of the grand old Bryn Mawr Hotel be erased from the town's collective memory. The importance of the collective memory was also emphasized by a President of the United States, who stated in his farewell presidential address in January of 1989:

...If we forget what we did, we won't know who we are. I am warning of an eradication of the American memory that could result, ultimately, in an erosion of the American spirit.<sup>2</sup>

This paper is neither a history of the town of Bryn Mawr nor an architectural history of the Bryn Mawr Hotel, nor a history of the railroad revolution and the Pennsylvania Railroad Company; these subjects have been





written about extensively through the years by competent scholars and historians. It must be remembered that this study focuses instead on the interrelationship and dependencies between the Bryn Mawr Hotel as a country resort hotel and the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. In my research I have attempted to fill in some of the blanks regarding the inception of both the first and second resort hotel at Bryn Mawr. Hopefully, through the information that is presented here, the interrelationship between the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, the Bryn Mawr Hotel and Bryn Mawr itself will become more clearly understood and, hence, appreciated.

Assisting me in my search for information regarding this grand structure and its predecessor were a number of people. Included are the archivists and librarians at the archives of the Hagley Museum in Wilmington, Delaware; the Pennsylvania State Archives in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; the Urban Archives at Temple University in Philadelphia; the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia and especially the librarians at the Lower Merion Historical Society in Rosemont, Pennsylvania and the Montgomery County Historical Society in Norristown, Pennsylvania. The archivist and members of the development office at The Baldwin School deserve a special thanks for allowing me entrance into the school and for giving me the



opportunity to peruse the material located there.

My most heartfelt appreciation is for Dr. Christa Wilmanns-Wells, who is both the professor of "The Common American Landscape" at the University of Pennsylvania and my thesis advisor. Her scholarly approach, genuine enthusiasm and sheer delight in her subject material as well as in her students served as an inspiration to me as I embarked upon this thesis. Further, her encouragement, guidance and unfailing support helped to sustain me throughout the course of this lengthy project.

My interest in the Bryn Mawr Hotel does not end here. In the future I hope to uncover more information regarding the hotel in both of its incarnations. My interest in this particular resort hotel will continue as will my ongoing fascination with this dying breed of nineteenth-century American architecture. It is my hope that this paper is the first of many research projects concerning the railroad resort hotel.

Alison Janet Reed



## Notes To Preface

1. Robert A. M. Stern, Pride of Places (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1986), p. 169.
2. President Ronald Reagan in farewell speech, January 11, 1989, Philadelphia Inquirer, January 12, 1989.



## Introduction

America would never be the same. The railroad revolution impacted nineteenth-century America with a force that would forever transform the lives and landscape of the American people. As a new means of transporting both freight and people across the continent, the burgeoning railroad industry succeeded in creating "new spaces, new regions of comprehension and economic value"<sup>1</sup> that were previously inconceivable. The far-reaching ramifications of the appearance of the railroad upon the nineteenth century American landscape and upon the lives of the American people manifested itself in a variety of ways.

One ramification of the technological and geographical advancement of the railroad was the provision of a more accessible nation to the American people. The railroad literally opened up new horizons like a chariot, "winging Americans on an aesthetic journey through the new empire"<sup>2</sup> to destinations that were previously reached in the mind's eye only or else with great physical difficulty, inconvenience and risk.<sup>3</sup> Enthusiasm for improved accessibility to the far reaches of our nation by the railroad was succinctly expressed by one traveller discussing his railroad journey in the Northwest in 1873 via the Northern Pacific Railroad line:





I have no knowledge of my own of the inside operation of the company, but I could not help feeling that a very remote portion of our country had been brought out of darkness to light already by this virgin work.<sup>4</sup>

The rapidly spreading network of tracks, which by 1869 had traversed the width of the continent, effectively connected east with west, north with south, city with city, and ocean with ocean.<sup>5</sup> As a result, the country became more unified, both physically and, in a way, spiritually.

The advancement of the railroad dramatically transformed the American landscape on a regional as well as on a national level. Through improved access, the extension of rail lines from major urban centers, such as Philadelphia, into outlying regions promoted the swift evolution of the rural countryside. What started as rural landscapes, intermittently dotted with farms and villages, were rapidly transformed by the railroad into landscapes where summer boarding houses, resort hotels and gentlemen's country seats were located.<sup>6</sup> Such regions in turn developed into places sometimes known as "borderlands," which were "deliberately poised between [the city and the country]" and which eventually developed into what we now call the suburbs.<sup>7</sup>

The railroad lines, of course, were not the first and sole means of transportation to extend their "tentacles



into the neighboring farmlands."8 Habitation of the rural countryside by European settlers, farmers and villagers occurred decades, and in some cases centuries, earlier than the advent of the railroad into such regions; access to these regions was primarily by horse or stagecoach. However, the extension of the railroad into these areas served to accelerate local development by increasing the mobilization of people from the urban centers to the outlying countryside.

More often than not and of special interest here, the development and habitation of the countryside occurred especially in the regions that were located adjacent to and parallel with the railroad track.<sup>9</sup> In all geographical regions of the country many suburban communities had their origins first as railroad stations, either hastily or otherwise erected, then as small towns that grew around the station.<sup>10</sup>

The emergence of the railroad company as a powerful corporate entity was another ramification of this transportation revolution. The railroadization of America provided opportunities for the creation of vast empires of power and wealth, including those that were created by newly incorporated railraod companies. Charters for new railroad corporations were sought by men who were clever and prescient enough to recognize the present needs and future opportunities presented by the burgeoning of the



railroad industry in America. An example of such a corporation, and one which will be discussed in this paper, is the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, which was incorporated in 1847 and henceforth served as a prototype for large railroad corporations well into the twentieth century.

The accumulation of wealth and power by railroad corporations stemmed from the direct operation of their railroad lines as well as from a number of construction and business activities which were related to the creation and extension of them. This related activity resulted in the diversification of railroad companies into other areas such as land acquisition, real estate speculation and development and, important for this study, the travel and hospitality industry.

The growth of many communities along railroad tracks was directly precipitated by the railroad company whose line traversed the land. In attempting to develop the land along their rights of way, railroad companies would often purchase land from local landowners or the government in preparation for the laying of their railroad tracks, and<sup>11</sup> small train stations would subsequently be erected intermittently along the line. In the process some railroad companies added their own concocted name to the station as well as to the surrounding area. From these beginnings grew many towns across the country. A primary



example of this phenomenon, and one which will be focused upon here, is the naming, planning and development which occurred between the years of 1868 and 1871 along the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad at what was to become the station of Bryn Mawr. While the name of the original village located nearby was Humphreysville, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company after laying its new tracks assigned the name of "Bryn Mawr" to its new station and the surrounding tract of land which it acquired. The community which developed around the station has retained the assigned name ever since.

Large railroad corporations increasingly found themselves in the travel and resort industry as well as the real estate business, as the railroad had a significant effect on the vacation and travel habits of the mid-nineteenth century urban dweller. By affording the "denizens of the crowded and heated city"<sup>12</sup> increased accessibility to the country, the railroad introduced new vacation possibilities to them and effectively transformed portions of the rural landscape into resort destinations. In providing access to the countryside, railroad companies were well aware of the continuing desire and tendency of the urban inhabitant to frequent country resorts in various locations around the country for purposes of health restoration as well as for the pursuit of pleasure. This common practice was a result





of significant forces and conditions extant in the urban environment; of the ever-changing theories of health and of the increasing popularity of the estivation of urban residents in the country.

Railroad companies, including the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, became involved in the vacation and resort hotel industry by promoting their rail lines. Companies were familiar with the living and social patterns of the middle and upper class urban dweller and thus were able to tailor their excursion routes as well as the promotion of these routes around these patterns. To heighten the attraction of train travel, resort hotels were strategically erected along or in the vicinity of the railroad in response to these public concerns and social customs. The resort hotel therefore acted as a lure to induce riders to use the railroad.

Railroad companies actively promoted their regular and excursion lines through a number of advertising devices. Among these devices were the placement of advertisements and articles in newspapers and journals. In addition railroad companies published and distributed various excursion guides and travel books.

The involvement of the railroad corporation in the travel and hospitality industry was spurred by society's growing custom of taking summer vacations. The increasing industrialization of society and the concomitant



mechanization of manufacturing processes afforded members of the newly prosperous middle and upper classes an increase in leisure time and, therefore, the opportunity of taking summer vacations. This practice enabled members of these socio-economic classes to make temporary visits to the country. Often the family in its entirety did not vacation together; when resorts and their hotels were located in close proximity to the city, the wife and children of many families often would spend a number of weeks at a time, if not the entire summer, at the resort hotel while the husband remained in the city during the week to attend his business. With this arrangement, the businessman would visit the vacationing family via the railroad on the weekends.<sup>13</sup> As such, one historian has said that many families:

perceived the summer resort as a natural extension of their winter homes and lifestyles, arriving for six to ten week stays with personal servants in tow.<sup>14</sup>

The practice of taking summer vacations was such a recent occurrence in society that the editor for Putnam's Monthly observed during the summer of 1856, "What a thoroughly modern phenomenon it is, this practice of 'emptying' the town!"<sup>15</sup> However, by the 1870's this phenomenon had become quite commonplace, as is evidenced by an advertisement for vacation clothing in the Philadelphia Inquirer in 1874 which describes the emptying of the city



as "the Summer Exodus."<sup>16</sup>

The flight to the countryside by summer vacationers was made for a number of reasons, among these being: the age-old pursuit and maintenance of physical and psychological good health; the recapturing of Jeffersonian agrarian and romantic ideals symbolized by nature in the American wilderness during the nineteenth century;<sup>17</sup> the pursuit of pleasure; and, increasingly, the adherence to the dictates of current fashion and social customs.

Popular vacation destinations which were accessed by the railroad included coastal areas such as the seashores of the East coast;<sup>18</sup> mountainous regions such as the Catskills in New York State and the White Mountains of New Hampshire; the mineral springs and "watering places" located in various regions of the United States and other destinations such as Canada.<sup>19</sup> Of course, many vacation areas, such as the therapeutic mineral springs of the South and coastal resorts in New England, had been frequented decades before the advent of the railroad into these regions. As mentioned above, access to many of these resort areas was gained by stagecoach or similar means. In mountainous terrain, however, stagecoach travel often proved to be unwieldy and even at times extremely distasteful. This inconvenient means of travel is illustrated by one traveller's reminiscences in 1881 about travelling to a resort in the Catskill Mountains in



upstate New York:

People who came for recreation were jostled up into the mountains by the great lumbering coaches-an experience that no sane person ever was ambitious to incur twice for mere enjoyment's sake<sup>20</sup>

Thus, the railroad line, as a more convenient means of reaching many remote areas, succeeded in the facilitation of access to and, therefore, the popularization of many more vacation areas. In addition, whereas in former years many resorts were frequented primarily by those with health concerns and ailments, the extension of the rail lines to these places served to democratize such areas, transforming them into resorts of recreation for unhealthy and healthy people alike. More often than not it was not until the introduction of the railroad line to these areas that resorts and their hotels truly proliferated.<sup>21</sup> Often, it is unknown which was the primary attractor to the resort site, the resort itself with all of its natural and man-made amenities or the access to the site that was provided by the railroad.

As a result of the increased accessibility which railroads provided to many resorts areas, the resort hotel enjoyed a thriving and burgeoning business roughly between the years of 1850 and 1900.<sup>22</sup> Resort hotels which were owned and operated by railroad companies sometimes sprang up either adjacent to or in the vicinity of the railroad





station (Fig. 1).<sup>23</sup> Regardless of where these resort hotels were located, in the mountains, at the seashore or in the rural countryside, they were popularly known as "country resorts."<sup>24</sup> In a mutually beneficial fashion, the railroad and the resort hotel depended on each other for sustenance. Obviously, resort hotels relied on the railroad line as the means by which their visitors could arrive. Likewise, railroad companies depended on the resort hotels to assist in luring passengers to use the train as a means of transportation to and from the hotel for extended vacations or for shorter stays en route to farther destinations. Therefore, the relationship between the railroad and the resort hotel was an important one, one upon which two initially disparate entities, the railroad and the resort hotel, increasingly came to rely.

This paper focuses on the relationship between the railroad and the country resort hotel or, more specifically, between the "Paoli Accommodation" of the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and the country resort hotel located at Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, the Bryn Mawr Hotel. In order to understand this important relationship, other areas will be addressed, namely, the interrelationships of the following: the development of the State of Pennsylvania's Main Line of Public Works and the Pennsylvania Railroad Company; the transformation of the regions located outside of Philadelphia along the Main



Line railroad into a country resort location; and the construction of the two Bryn Mawr Hotels, located in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, adjacent to the Main Line railroad.

The result of these interwoven relationships was a specialized landscape which is evidenced by surviving primary and secondary documentation regarding both the first and second structure which housed the Bryn Mawr Hotel and also by the material remains of the second structure in the form of the present-day Baldwin School, a private primary and secondary preparatory school for girls.

For the sake of clarity it is necessary at the outset to establish a brief chronological framework of the first and second Bryn Mawr Hotel. The first Bryn Mawr Hotel building was constructed by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and operated by a subsidiary of the company, the Keystone Hotel Company.<sup>25</sup> Constructed in 1871 as a promotional project, the Bryn Mawr Hotel was designed by Wilson Brothers and Company, an architectural and engineering firm which designed a number of structures for the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.<sup>26</sup> This first Bryn Mawr Hotel, or the Keystone Hotel Company as it was sometimes known, enjoyed almost immediate popularity as a summertime country resort hotel and drew a large number of visitors and vacationers from Philadelphia and other places as well. After the first Bryn Mawr Hotel was destroyed by



fire in 1887, a second Bryn Mawr Hotel was designed by the Philadelphia-based architectural firm of Furness, Evans and Company and reconstructed in 1891 on the same site as the first hotel building of 1871. The owner and operator of the second hotel structure, however, was not the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, per se, but the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company instead.

A privately owned corporation, the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company had among its officers prominent industrialists and businessman of the Philadelphia area,<sup>27</sup> among whom were people associated with the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. The second Bryn Mawr Hotel enjoyed popularity as a resort hotel between the years of 1891 and 1913, attracting Philadelphians for vacation purposes and also to its many social functions, including the annual Bryn Mawr Horse Show.

The functions of the second Bryn Mawr Hotel building broadened in 1896 when the building was utilized for the first time as a resort hotel during the summer months while housing Miss Florence Baldwin's school for girls, later The Baldwin School, during the fall and winter months of the year. The dual function of the second Bryn Mawr Hotel building remained in effect until the demise of its hotel function in 1913, when The Baldwin School leased the building and its grounds for the entire year. This leasing arrangement lasted until 1922 when the hotel



building and property were acquired outright by the school. The prestigious Baldwin School has continued to thrive and has occupied the former hotel building and its grounds ever since that time. Although the intervening years have brought a number of alterations to the hotel building, especially as its function changed from an overnight boarding school to a day school in the 1970's, its physical integrity has remained largely intact and hopefully will continue to do so.

In essence, the relationship between the country resort hotel at Bryn Mawr, in both of its incarnations, and the Paoli Accommodation of the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad will be focused upon within the context of the social and health concerns of mid-nineteenth-century urban dwellers as well as within the context of the historic development of the Pennsylvania Railroad and its impact upon the Philadelphia environs and landscape.

In the examination of these relationships, this paper will first discuss the phenomenon of the country resort and the resort hotel, its increasing popularity from the middle to the latter half of the nineteenth century and its relationship to the railroad. Following this discussion will be a history of the development of the Main Line of Public Works across the state of Pennsylvania in which the Paoli Accommodation of the Main Line will be





highlighted along with its effects on the surrounding countryside. The acquisition of the Bryn Mawr Tract and its subsequent subdivision and development by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company will be discussed next followed by a history and description of the first Bryn Mawr Hotel, constructed by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company in 1871. Finally a history and description of the second Bryn Mawr Hotel, constructed by the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company in 1891 will be presented along with a brief account of the gradual demise of the Bryn Mawr Hotel and its transformation into an educational facility, The Baldwin School for girls, between the years of 1896 and 1922. Through examining the close relationship which existed between the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad and the Bryn Mawr Hotel, the profound effect which this relationship had on the development of the entire Bryn Mawr area hopefully will be better understood.



## Notes to Introduction

1. Alan Trachtenberg, The Incorporation of America (New York: Hill & Wang, 1983), p. 59.

2. Trachtenberg, p. 19.

3. Access to vacation destinations was gained by overland and water routes. Stagecoach, horse and carriage and boats were the primary means of vehicular travel. According to Frederick L. Beaver, James N.J. Henwood and John G. Muncie in their article "The Road To Resorts," Pennsylvania Heritage 10 (1984), p. 35, "as long as transportation was limited to water and cumbersome overland routes [many places were] likely to remain...remote rural outposts.

4. Gath, Philadelphia Inquirer, July 7, 1873.

5. The first trans-continental railway, the Union - Pacific, was completed in 1869 and connected the east coast to the west coast.

6. Henry Hudson Holly, in his Country Seats (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1863), p. 21, discusses the gentleman's country seat, for "families of culture and refinement [who] seek the social comforts of the city" in the wintertime and, tired of the "dissipation and artificialities of town life [retreat to] the simpler and purer pleasures" of country life in the springtime. According to Holly, another class of country dwellers existed who, "though compelled to spend the business hours of the day in the city, gladly hasten when these are over to peaceful homes, removed from the bustle and turmoil of the crowded town." Such a commuter lifestyle continued into the twentieth century and was instrumental in the development of many suburban communities. In addition to expounding on the country seat, Holly also included "lithographic designs for cottages, villas, mansions, etc. with their accompanying outbuildings."

7. John R. Stilgoe, Borderlands (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), p. 57. Throughout this book Stilgoe discusses the development of borderlands and their transformation into suburban areas.

8. John Brinkerhoff Jackson, American Space (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1972), p. 21.



9. In American Space, p. 67, Jackson discusses the domination of the railroad in the landscape in areas in the midwest and elsewhere in the country and how it determined the physical form that the future town would take. According to Jackson the presence of the railroad line "provided for a linear organization of space that appeared in many places after the Civil War." Of this linear organization Jackson says also that the new towns along the railroad line did not form independent social spaces, but "were integrated from the beginning into a well-designed economic process, into a linear system vividly symbolized by the lines of track and their accompanying telegraph wires."

10. Other examples of railroad designed towns are the towns along the Illinois Central Railroad, extending from Chicago in the north to Galena in the south. The railroad company laid out 33 towns with exactly the same gridlike plan and each with identical street names. These towns included Onarga, Loda, Pera and Urbana and eventually grew to become prosperous places.

11. According to Jackson in American Space, p. 50 and 67, in an effort to help railroad companies finance the construction costs of building their lines, the United States Congress often granted large amounts of government-owned land, called "Congress Land," to railroad companies in the midwest and northwest regions of America. As a result, railroad companies were eager to promote settlement of their land and advertised to lure settlers, either singly or in groups, American or foreign. In creating their rights of way for the rail lines, other railroad companies, such as the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, purchased large tracts of land adjacent to the tracks, subdivided the land into smaller parcels, and sold the parcels to individual buyers.

12. Advertisement, News of Bryn Mawr, "Invitation to Summer Visitors," July 7, 1886.

13. Resort hotel advertisements reflect this practice. As an advertisement for the Renovo Hotel said in the Philadelphia Inquirer in 1872, "Businessmen wishing their families at a healthful and pleasant location, easy of access, can leave Philadelphia Saturday noon, and return by Monday afternoon spending Sunday in Renovo. Conversely, as stated in the Bryn Mawr News of August 26, 1887, several businessmen stayed at a popular country resort, the Devon Inn in Devon, Pennsylvania, "until their respective families grow tired of Bar Harbour and return to the busy marts of men."



14. Alf Evers et al., Resorts of the Catskills (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977), p. 78.

15. Stilgoe, p. 45.

16. Rorkhill and Wilson, Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, July 9, 1874.

17. Stilgoe, p. 38.

18. Seashore resorts were located on the Atlantic coastline from New Jersey to Maine. Popular seashore resorts included Nahant, Massachusetts; Cape May, New Jersey; Beach Haven, New Jersey; Newport, Rhode Island; Bar Harbour, Maine and Mount Desert Island, Maine.

19. Other popular vacation spots included places such as Ephrata Springs, Pennsylvania; Saratoga Springs, New York; Delaware Water Gap, Pennsylvania; Niagara Falls, New York; Lake George, New York and the Thousand Islands.

20. News Item, New York Times, July 4, 1881.

21. Frederick Beaver et al., "The Road to Resorts: Transportation and Tourism in Monroe County." Pennsylvania Heritage 10(1984), p. 36. In their discussion of the effects of the railroad on Monroe County, Pennsylvania, the authors state, "A lasting result of the railroad age was the development of the tourist industry. in Monroe County. Although the county had usual taverns, inns and hotels, it was not until the railroads made access quick, convenient and especially comfortable that resorts proliferated, extolling the mountain air, the attractive scenery and the rural surroundings." This was not, however, unique to Monroe County, but to many regions in the country. This theme, as it relates to many areas, and more specifically Bryn Mawr, will be treated in the forthcoming chapter "Country Resorts."

22. Dianne Newell, "The Short Lived Phenomenon of Railroad Station Hotels," Historic Preservation (July-September, 1974), p. 33.

23. Ibid.

24. In the 19th century the term "country " was loosely used, not necessarily denoting agricultural land. In a number of readings and newspaper advertisements for and about the country resort, "country" encompasses rural, mountain and seashore resorts. The fact that a resort hotel was located in a region well away from the confines of the city amidst nature rendered it a country resort.





25. In addition to operating the Bryn Mawr Hotel, the Keystone Hotel Company operated the Union Depot Hotel in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the Logan House in Altoona Pennsylvania, and restaurants in the following train stations: Broad Street Station Philadelphia, West Philadelphia, Jersey City, New Jersey, Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Maryland, and Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. A more in-depth discussion of the Keystone Hotel Company is included in Chapter 4, "The First Bryn Mawr Hotel."

26. Sandra L. Tatman and Roger W. Moss, Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects 1700-1930 (Boston: G.K. Hall and Company, 1985), pp. 868-871. Wilson Brothers and Company established an architectural and engineering firm in 1876. Between John Allston Wilson and Joseph Miller Wilson, the firm acquired a number of commissions from several railroad companies. John Allston Wilson started working for the Pennsylvania Railroad Company in 1869 and Joseph Miller Wilson in 1860. Henry W. Wilson became a junior partner in 1876 and continued the firm under the name of Wilson, Harris and Richards after 1902.

27. The Bryn Mawr Hotel Company was chartered and incorporated in 1890 expressly for the establishment of a second Bryn Mawr Hotel. More information on this corporation is treated in Chapter 5, "The Second Bryn Mawr Hotel."



# I

## The Country Resort

It was gradually becoming a favorite summer retreat for some of the metropolitans, who, debilitated or disgusted by the heat and confinement of the city, longed for the charmed air and liberal shade.<sup>1</sup>

The origins of the resort date back to ancient Egyptian and Roman times. It was not until the nineteenth century, however, that the resort hotel as a specific building type where specialized activity occurred reached the height of its development.<sup>2</sup> In fact, the American resort hotel came of age in the years between 1870 and 1910.<sup>3</sup>

One category of resort which proliferated during this era was the country resort, whose burgeoning popularization in the middle of the nineteenth century was due to a number of developments occurring in America. Some of the ideologies and causes for the increased interest in the beneficial country atmosphere and the flight from the "miasmata" of the cities emerged before the Civil War as a result of the encroachment of industrialization. The beliefs regarding the beneficial country atmosphere were reinforced by current theories of medical science and existing sentiments of anti-urbanism which gained momentum



during and after the Civil War and which extended into the second half of the nineteenth century.

The lure of the country to Americans was also related to the attraction of the "picturesque" countryside for urban dwellers who were growing tired of the dismal landscape which industrialization was producing in large cities. In addition, existing Jeffersonian traditions from the turn of the nineteenth century and renewed agrarian values combined with health concerns caused by increasing urbanization, immigration and rapid social change. All of these concerns merged to produce a popular idea that "country life" was far superior to life in the city for the physical, psychological, and moral benefits which such surroundings imparted. These beliefs resulted in a seemingly obsessive concern for physical and mental health in the middle of the nineteenth century.

### **Anti-Urbanism**

The increasing industrialization of American cities caused a resurgence of anti-urban sentiments among a number of people. Although these beliefs existed as early as 1800 when Thomas Jefferson viewed large cities "as pestilential to the morals, the health and the liberties of man,"<sup>4</sup> they arose again in the 1840's and 1850's. It was around this time that reformers were loudly denouncing the many evils which appeared to accompany



urban life and were extolling the benefits of country living instead. Writers such as Nathaniel Parker Willis and Susan Fenimore Cooper wrote prolifically in both books and magazines of the virtues of the country. The writings of these reformers appeared in articles in a number of popular books and literary magazines.<sup>5</sup>

The reemergence of the idealization of country life in the middle of the nineteenth century has been called "American pastoralism."<sup>6</sup> As a reaction to the drastic and far-reaching effects of industrialization on society and the urban landscape, American pastoralism was an

idealiz[ation] of the simple, rural environment [in which] an inchoate longing for a more 'natural' environment enters into the contemptuous attitude that many Americans adopt toward urban life with the result that we neglect our cities and desert them for the suburbs.<sup>7</sup>

According to the same source, this negative attitude toward urban life "generates... the urge to withdraw from civilization's growing power and complexity." The country then provided for the nineteenth century urban dweller a landscape of seeming simplicity and serenity where such a withdrawal from urban complexities was possible if not on a permanent year-round basis then on a temporary, seasonal one instead. As a result, many urban residents, or those that could financially afford to, began relocating their primary residences from the city to the country in the





1860's, often retaining their jobs in the city. This phenomenon was described by Henry Hudson Holly in his definitive Country Seats as follows:

There is another class, which though compelled to spend the business hours of the day in the city, gladly hasten when these are over to peaceful homes, removed from the bustle and turmoil of the crowded town. This manner of living is becoming very popular, especially among the business community, and now that we have so many and ready means of communication between cities and their suburbs for many miles around, and also trifling an expense, it is rather to be wondered at that more do not adopt it.<sup>8</sup>

### Effects of Industrialization

As previously stated, the popularity of the country resort was due in part to the drastic effects which the nineteenth century industrial revolution had on large-scale urban centers and their populations. The industrialization of major cities, especially Philadelphia, which achieved "unquestioned industrial prominence" by the 1850's,<sup>9</sup> and the sharp increase in population due to the tremendous influx of immigrant workers resulted in the rise of a variety of social problems. These problems included overcrowded living conditions in inadequate rowhouses which were located in ghettos along with the problems of poor sanitation which prevailed in these neighborhoods. Inferior living conditions of the cities' new immigrant neighborhoods



in combination with Philadelphia's existing sanitation problems often resulted in rampant epidemics, although the city was deemed healthier than Chicago or New York at the time.

The existence of these detrimental urban living conditions was a major cause in effecting an annual summertime "flight from the city" even in the first half of the nineteenth century. In David Boswell Reid's Ventilation in American Dwellings of 1858, a book which was published before the germ theory of disease became popularly known in America, Reid and his co-author, Elisha Harris, established the connection between urban crowding and the development and the spread of disease. As a result, they blamed "the close, uncleansed, un-ventilated residences of the poor [for becoming] the homes of disease and pauperism."<sup>10</sup> Relating such living conditions to the prevailing social stratification existing in most cities, Harris and Reid claimed that

the crowded narrow tenements to which avarice drives poverty, in filthy streets and noisome courts, become perennial sources of deadly miasmata that may be wafted to the neighboring mansions of wealth and refinement, to cause sickness and mourning there; and once the breadth of pestilence becomes epidemic in any city, commerce and trade are driven to more salubrious marts.<sup>11</sup>

The association of disease with inner-city poverty was



undoubtedly instrumental in driving the more well-to-do urban resident from his home in the city to the country for the summer season, if not the entire year, where healthfulness was almost guaranteed.

### **Bad Air**

In addition to the fear of crowded living conditions, the "bad air movement"<sup>12</sup> of the ante-bellum years had long-lasting residual effects which served to enhance the attraction of the country resort with its fresh, clean air in the ensuing decades. As early as the late eighteenth century "bad air" had been denounced as the cause of many sicknesses and, in many instances, even death. During the yellow fever epidemic of 1793 in Philadelphia, it was determined by Benjamin Rush, the city's pre-eminent physician, that the cause of the epidemic was the atmospheric presence of "noxious effluvia" which emanated from the "putrification" of a recently arrived shipment of coffee.<sup>13</sup> Regarding the scourge of the bilious yellow fever of the summer of 1793, Rush stated that

...for the production of our pestilential disease, three things are necessary: 1. Putrid exhalations; 2. An inflammatory condition of the atmosphere; and 3. An exciting cause such as great heat, cold...<sup>14</sup>

Clearly Dr. Rush attributed not only yellow fever but remitting and intermitting fevers to contaminated air as



well.<sup>15</sup> The fear of contaminated air lingered well into the nineteenth century, as various fevers, cholera and consumption made their appearance. In fact, the cholera epidemic of 1832 was widely attributed to "atmospheric malaise" by most physicians.<sup>16</sup>

Among critics of stifling, underventilated areas were Dr. Edward Hitchcock, who wrote on the subject for the Journal of Health in 1829. Dr. Hitchcock claimed that already used or "respired" air was "rendered impure by the mere act of breathing." As such, according to Hitchcock in his Journal of Health, people living in over-populated urban areas were more prone to disease because of the pervasive bad air in such "narrow and confined streets, courts and alleys" and the shortage of pure, fresh air in these places.<sup>17</sup>

### **Elevated Locations**

In response to the desire for uncontaminated air, elevated land was sought by urban dwellers for both year-round and summer living, and the travel habits of these people reflect this search. The widely held notions of contaminated air were not lost on resort hotel owners or railroad companies, especially the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. These entities were keenly aware of the economic opportunities which these atmospheric concerns presented and clearly took advantage of them in the promotion of





their facilities and services. Consequently, promotional literature and advertisements for nearby residential developments and local and distant country resorts abounded in many Philadelphia area newspapers, many of which emphasized the quality of the air. These popular sources are significant in that they reveal the popular concerns of the day. Development and resort advertisements boasting of their high situation, including those for the Bryn Mawr area, were published in newspapers such as the Philadelphia Inquirer, Philadelphia Press and the Public Ledger. These notices seemed to enjoy the greatest proliferation throughout the 1870's, after which they began to decrease in number in the late 1880's and 1890's.<sup>18</sup>

One promotional article which was written about the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad and the attractions and resorts located en route extolled the benefits of the mountain air, saying that "the beneficial results manifest themselves when the system becomes impregnated with the subtle influence of the mountain air."<sup>19</sup> In addition classified advertisements announced the sale of land in nearby Ridley Park, Delaware County, which was "a romantic and beautiful suburban town combining healthy climate, elevated location, pure air and water, etc.,"<sup>20</sup> and the Park House in Chestnut Hill was advertised with its "high situation."<sup>21</sup>



In many of these advertisements, the actual elevation above sea level of both residential and resort locales was a major amenity much acclaimed, the promotion of which undoubtedly contributed to the attraction of residents and vacationers alike. For example, country homes in nearby Media Park were advertised as being situated 300 feet above tidewater<sup>22</sup> while Bryn Mawr was touted in more than one advertisement and brochure as being "located on the highest of a series of tables, four hundred and ten feet above tidewater."<sup>23</sup> Interestingly, evidence of a cross-town rivalry between the elevations of Bryn Mawr and Chestnut Hill is exposed by the following passage:

Chestnut Hill had always bragged of its high air, but when the Government published its official list, based on the height of the rails at the respective railway stations, it was found that Bryn Mawr was listed as four inches higher than Chestnut Hill, and the former crowed over the latter accordingly.<sup>24</sup>

The much sought after amenity of an elevated location is important to note here because in the study of the development of the common landscape of America, the topography of the land is often overlooked in metropolitan areas and their suburbs. The majority of people today would certainly not think of the elevation of Bryn Mawr, or Chestnut Hill for that matter, as an attractive feature of the area.



## The Ravages of Disease

Summer relocation from the city to the country was especially desired by urban residents because dangerous diseases and not merely "bad air" plagued many American cities during the middle of the nineteenth century. The years of 1832, 1849 and 1866 brought widespread cholera epidemics to not only larger Eastern cities, but a number of cities elsewhere in the country as well.<sup>25</sup> Although the epidemic affected the population of Philadelphia less severely than those of other cities,<sup>26</sup> the epidemic nevertheless had its effect on Philadelphians. The appearance of daily reports of the death tolls of the cholera epidemic in other cities on the front page of the Philadelphia Inquirer<sup>27</sup> undoubtedly frightened Philadelphians, thereby affecting their summer living habits.

As mentioned earlier, flight from the city was not new to residents of Philadelphia, for they had a history of fleeing the city to escape the summer heat as well as the scourge of deadly fevers and epidemics. As early as the summer of 1793 when yellow fever first ravaged the population of Philadelphia, families who could afford to do so left the city to escape the effects of the fever, as illustrated by James Madison who wrote to James Monroe in the summer of 1793:



I understand that the malignant fever in Philadelphia is raging still with great violence; and all the inhabitants who can, are flying from it in every direction.<sup>28</sup>

Flight from the city was strongly urged by prominent physicians such as Benjamin Rush, who reported in a letter to his wife "that many people are flying from the city, and some by my advice."<sup>29</sup> As a result of such advice and because of the example of many others, large numbers of Philadelphians removed their families to healthier locations in Germantown, to the Northern Liberties, Frankford and to the Falls of the Schuylkill River.<sup>30</sup> The memory of these pestilential summers undoubtedly remained in the minds of Philadelphians well into the nineteenth century when cholera, typhoid, scarlet and other "fevers" threatened the health of the Philadelphian population. Because of these long-standing health threats it is not surprising that the practices of living and estivating in the countryside surrounding Philadelphia lingered as late as the middle of the nineteenth century, especially in the summertime.

### **Sanitary Awakening Movement**

Another result of the widespread fear of pestilence is found in the "Sanitary Awakening" which occurred in America in the middle of the nineteenth century.<sup>31</sup> Whereas in former years, disease was often believed to occur as a





consequence of unclean thoughts and immoral lifestyles, the spread of disease was blamed increasingly on external, unsanitary environmental conditions instead. These new attitudes and perceptions of disease and health, both physical and mental, were slowly disseminated from pulpits and by newspapers and pamphlets to inhabitants of urban areas.<sup>32</sup>

The city of Philadelphia was affected by the new associations between the origin of disease and the physical environment and reacted accordingly. During the cholera epidemic of 1849, for example, the city reacted differently than it did during the epidemics of previous years, relying on "sanitary measures more than on prayer to fight the epidemic."<sup>33</sup> During the epidemic of 1849, the Board of Health organized a Sanitary Committee to conduct a sanitizing campaign during the summer when the epidemic reached its worst period. As a result of an investigative report of the committee, which described in excruciating detail the unsanitary conditions which prevailed in the city, Philadelphia's municipal leaders responded by cleaning up the city promptly and thoroughly.<sup>34</sup>

As a consequence of the dissemination and acquisition of new information regarding the origins of disease, urban residents became acutely aware of the positive relationship between a healthy living environment replete with fresh air and clean water and the successful



maintenance of sound physical health. With this in mind Philadelphians, especially the well-to do, searched for healthier living environments and either visited or permanently relocated to the suburbs of the city or to the countryside surrounding the city.

As mentioned earlier, an alternative to uprooting the entire household and relocating to the suburbs or the country for year-round habitation was to retreat to the country for an extended but temporary period of time, usually during the summer season. This practice became quite popular in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The gentleman's "country seat" was increasingly used by wealthier urban residents to effect this summertime retreat.<sup>35</sup>

### **The Country Resort as a Cure**

Contagious diseases and epidemics were not the only health concerns of the day. During this health-conscious era there also existed among people, both well-to-do and otherwise, a pre-occupation with physical maladies and ailments. These concerns were fostered by opposing schools of medicine which were practiced by a number of learned physicians as well as lay persons. Advocates of "heroic" medicine vehemently opposed those of "Thomsonian" or "Botanic" medicine so that much attention was called to the differing medical theories of the day.<sup>36</sup> In addition,



from 1835 onward, there existed a plethora of self-help medical guides which advocated the use of vegetable and mineral preparations for the alleviation of both major and minor physical ailments.<sup>37</sup> The emergence of these opposing schools of medical theory and the arguments which occurred between their followers as well as the availability of the many self-help medical guides not only indicate high popular interest but also contributed to the popular pre-occupation with the physical and mental condition.

The proprietors of many resorts, both near and far, claimed that their retreats could provide relief for all kinds of physical and mental health conditions either through fresh air, water cures, scenic conditions or social atmosphere. Evidence of these beliefs exists in a number of advertisements for American resorts as found in Philadelphia newspapers. These places appeared to be cure-all resorts in that they claimed to provide physical, visual and social relief to a wide variety of people. For example, the resort at Chittenango White Sulfur Springs in Madison County, New York, offered the following:

mineral waters of wonderful curative power  
in addition to being a most delightful  
resort for the tourist or man of business  
seeking health and recreation.<sup>38</sup>

White Sulphur Springs in West Virginia, [was] famous for both its "alterative waters and fashionable patronage,"<sup>39</sup> and the generous advertisement for Bennington, Vermont,



touted

the extreme healthfulness of Bennington, its superb scenery, charming drives and historic associations. [This location was] very popular among dwellers of cities and seekers of health and pleasure.<sup>40</sup>

Particularly all-encompassing to the summer sojourner was Saratoga Springs, which was located in upstate New York and was attractive to the

invalid, drawn thither by its healing fountains; the lover of gay life and fashionable amusements; the devotee of nature, and one who would read human character, each unquestioned in his pursuit, finds ample means of enjoyment there, and all who will may find genial friends.<sup>41</sup>

Early on, Philadelphians had their own all-purpose country resort locale at Germantown. Accessed by horsecar as early as the 1830's, city dwellers increasingly viewed the rural environment of Germantown as the answer to all of their mental and physical health problems. Exclaimed Philadelphia diarist Sidney George Fisher in a diary entry of the 1850's:

The advantages [of the horsecar lines] are so obvious that this villa and cottage life has become quite a passion and is producing a complete revolution in our habits. It is dispersing the people of the city over the surrounding country, introducing thus among them, ventilation, cleanliness, space, healthful pursuits, and the influences of natural beauty, the





want of which are the sources of so much  
evil, moral and physical, in large  
towns.<sup>42</sup>

Germantown was not the only resort locale in the Philadelphia area which provided the visitor with a number of amenities. When the Bryn Mawr Hotel entered the country resort scene in the 1870's it too boasted of offering the summer sojourner a variety of things, among these being "cheap boarding, pure, invigorating air, beautiful scenery and good society."<sup>43</sup>

The health-giving attributes of country resorts motivated people with various physical and nervous ailments in the hope that they would be relieved and even cured. At the same time the healthful country resort was also seen as an important measure in "preventive" medicine. In addition, the country resort was a gathering place, often providing a gay social life, which was believed to be beneficial to mental health; even then people were aware of the therapeutic qualities of a change in surroundings and fresh faces for those suffering from depression and some nervous diseases.

### **The Fashionable Summer Resort**

Somewhat less a reaction to the imminence of disease than in earlier years and more a response to the dictates of current fashion and vacation theory, the annual summer retreat to the country in the 1870's and 1880's became



more of a pleasurable, luxurious social practice than a health-inducing one. This is not to say that country living was no longer sought for its curative powers, for magazine advertisements published as late as 1905 show evidence of still-existing beliefs of the beneficial attributes of living in the country.<sup>44</sup> However, whereas the retreat to the country was sought by Philadelphians in the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century both as a health-protecting and life-saving measure, the same custom in the latter half of the nineteenth century was practiced with slightly different goals in mind. While practiced with good health in mind, estivating at resort hotels had become more of a fashionable social custom. Illustrating this are several statements describing the social ambience of resort hotels, in which:

the halls dazzle with beauty, their  
parlors rustle with fashion; their  
corridors resound with mirth; and their  
drives are a whirl of excitement,<sup>45</sup>

and where "people congregate to see and be seen and to display fine clothing."<sup>46</sup>

### **The New Summer Vacation**

In addition to the prevalence of existing health concerns and current social customs contributing to the popularity of the country resort, the country resort also



flourished because of the increasingly popular practice of taking a summer vacation. Vacations were made more practicable for many Americans because of the increased industrialization of society toward the middle of the nineteenth century. The mechanization of manufacturing processes, the invention of mass transportation and the shortening of the workday provided an additional amount of leisure time which was available in the daily lives of a great number of people.<sup>47</sup> As a result, the vacation gained popularity as people searched for ways in which to utilize their new-found leisure time. Then, as now, the summer season was the primary vacation season, and people in all regions of the country took advantage of their vacation time in a variety of ways. One critic commented on the novelty of the summer vacation and the way in which Americans celebrated it

From one end of the country to the other may now be seen an interesting spectacle of a great people at play. The lesson of the necessity of relaxation and recreation has been so recently learned, that we still play awkwardly.<sup>48</sup>

The fact that rest and relaxation was a necessity for good mental health was slowly becoming a realization to Americans, as the same observer pointed out that

...We Americans are the busiest people under the sun, but we have at last learned the necessity of a certain amount of relaxation and recreation...We pay royally



for our vacation sport.<sup>49</sup>

Interestingly enough, this same observer differentiated between the kinds of vacations which were available, stressing the importance of choosing the correct vacation wisely, whether it was a vacation for pleasure or for rest. There was the vacation replete with "physical exercise for the brain worker" and also the vacation with "mental exercise for the man who toils with his hands;" a vacation in the country for city dwellers; and a vacation at the "great lakes and the seaboard for those who dwell inland."<sup>50</sup>

Regardless of which kind of vacation was taken it was generally acknowledged that change itself was the key to a successful vacation. As the same theorist believed:

Change is one of the great factors in relaxation and rest. Everyone instinctively longs for something that his daily life does not afford. What is the change that each man desires at vacation time is known only to the man himself. But a change of some kind is within reach of everyone.<sup>51</sup>

The country resort hotel at Bryn Mawr provided just this kind of change in atmosphere and daily routine. Whether it was visited for a short weekend vacation or for lengthy seasonal stays, the Bryn Mawr Hotel, at only nine miles from the city, was the answer to the vacation needs of many inner-city dwellers of Philadelphia. The clientele of





this particular resort hotel, however, were chiefly of the aforementioned "brain worker" category of vacationers or else from the "leisure class" of society.<sup>52</sup> As such, the Bryn Mawr Hotel provided both physical and mental exercise in the way of sports activities and parlor card games as well as an abundance of social activities such as "assemblies and dances." These attributes, in conjunction with the benefits of clean, fresh air and the beauty of the countryside, rendered Bryn Mawr as natural a location as any for the pursuit of summer vacation pleasures.

### **The Railroad and the Resort Hotel**

The importance of the geographical relationship between country resort hotels and the railroad cannot be overemphasized. Whether a resort hotel pre-dated the nearby railroad or not, the patronage and ensuing success of many country resort hotels would not have been realized had it not been for the direct access which was provided by the railroad and also the promotional devices utilized by railroad companies. Understanding the intertwined relationship, geographical and otherwise, between the railroad and the resort hotel as illustrated by hotel and railroad company records; advertisements in popular periodicals of the day; and travel and promotional literature is essential as the histories and relationship between the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad and the



entity of the Bryn Mawr Hotel, in both of its forms, is examined here.

The geographical proximity of the Bryn Mawr train station to the resort facility at Bryn Mawr was essential to the success of the hotel and was an amenity which resort proprietors exploited fully in their newspaper and magazine advertisements. Besides listing in their advertisements the healthful attributes which the hotel offered, many resorts listed the railway line which provided the most direct access to the resort.

In addition, advertisements often announced the time in minutes which it took to reach the resort from the railroad station, with this distance sometimes emphasized in bold letters. This revealing evidence helps to illustrate the important role which the location of the railroad station played in the successful patronage of the hotel. In Philadelphia, advertisements emphasizing this close geographical distance were published frequently in the Philadelphia Inquirer between the 1860's and the 1890's. For example, the Colonnade Hotel on Pacific Avenue in Atlantic City, which became a popular beach resort,<sup>53</sup> was advertised solely as being "between [the] Railroad Depot and the beach, in full view of the ocean."<sup>54</sup> A singular advertisement for the Chalfont hotel in Atlantic City read only, "The Chalfont, Atlantic City, is now open. Railroad to the beach."<sup>55</sup> The proximity of the



railroad to these resort hotels was obviously seen as the most desirable aspect. Interestingly, while the words "Summer Boarding, near station" was the large, bold-faced heading in one advertisement, "gunning, boating and fishing" constituted the very fine print below it.<sup>56</sup>

The emphasis that was placed on the proximity of a resort hotel to the railroad is especially evident in a large advertisement placed in the Philadelphia Inquirer for the Renovo Hotel, a combination station and hotel which was operated by the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad Company in Clinton County, Pennsylvania.<sup>57</sup> This notice used more advertising space to discuss its accessibility by train, information on baggage handling, Pullman car availability, train fares, train schedules and ticket purchasing locations than it did on the amenities of the actual hotel. The lure of this hotel, above all other traits, was its easy accessibility for the

businessmen wishing their families at a healthful and pleasant location, easy of access [where they could] leave Philadelphia Saturday noon, and return by Monday afternoon spending Sunday in Renovo.<sup>58</sup>

The close physical relationship between the railroad company and the resort hotel is also evident, once again, in an advertisement placed by a competitor of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company. Published in 1871 in the



Philadelphia Inquirer, this particular notice included a list of the

Summer Resorts On Line of the Philadelphia  
and Reading Railroad and Branches

These Pennsylvania resorts were listed as follows:

Mansion House, Me[t]haney City  
Tuscarora Hotel, Tuscarora  
Mount Carmel House, Mount Carmel  
White House, Reading  
Central Avenue House, Reading  
Mount Pleasant, Boyertown  
Lititz Springs, Lititz  
Mansion House, Pottsville  
Cold Springs Hotel, Harrisburg  
Ephrata Springs, Ephrata  
Perkiomen Bridge Hotel, Collegeville  
Prospect Terrace, Collegeville  
Spring Mill Heights, Conshohocken  
Douty House, Shamokin 59

Whether these hotels were owned and operated by the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company or not, the access which was provided by the railroad line was undoubtedly essential to the success of each hotel. Conversely, the hotels provided a drawing card for travellers to use the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad, which probably would probably have been the reason behind the placement of the above advertisement by the railroad company in the first place.

While no equivalent lists of hotels located along the route of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company were found in newspapers published during the same time period,





advertisements placed by the Passenger Department of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company were found which offered tours to various regions. Sponsored by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, these trips included a personally conducted "tour embracing Watkins Glen, Niagara Falls, Toronto [and the] Thousand Islands"<sup>60</sup> and also

a summer series of personally conducted pleasure tours via the Pennsylvania Railroad [to Luray Inn at Luray Caverns, Virginia.]<sup>61</sup>

Even if the resort hotels at these vacation destinations were not owned by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, the advertisement of the hotels themselves in connection with the railroad served to call widespread attention to such areas which, in turn, attracted ridership for the Pennsylvania Railroad lines in order to visit these places. Additional evidence of the importance of the physical relationship between the railroad station and the resort hotel was the listing of "Principal Hotels" directly below each resort description offered in the Pennsylvania Railroad Company Passenger Department's Summer Excursion Routes.<sup>62</sup> In this travel guide, the vacation areas and transportation connections with over 142 other passenger lines for a number of excursion trips are listed and illustrated for the traveller.

Beautiful Vistas



Besides the access provided by the railroad, another important attraction of the country resort was the search for the "beautiful vista." Whether the resort was located in the mountains, in rural regions or at the seashore, the delightful scenery and magnificent views that were available at many resorts were emphasized and extolled repeatedly in popular advertisements and travel literature.

Some newspaper advertisements went as far as listing the specific views which a resort location was sure to provide the visitor. For example, the Waumbek House in Jefferson, New Hampshire, which was said to possess a "location and scenery unequalled for grandeur and beauty," was situated on Mt. Stair King in such a way that from its premises could be viewed the complete vistas of the White Mountain range, the Franconia Mountains and the Green Mountains, according to the advertisement.<sup>63</sup> Lancaster House in Lancaster, New Hampshire, boasted of being "located in the valley of the Connecticut in full view of Mt. Washington and the Vermont Hills."<sup>64</sup>

Particularly illustrative of the emphasis which was placed on the scenery available at each resort was an offer from the Bush House in Pennsylvania to anyone interested in visiting the resort that "stereoscopic views of local scenery [could] be seen at No. 1104 Chestnut



Street in Philadelphia."<sup>65</sup> The emphasis on resort scenery, and especially the "vista", is evident in advertisement after advertisement and illustrates the particular pre-occupation on this natural amenity which occurred in the middle of the nineteenth century. It is indicative of the increased interest and appreciation of the landscape which Americans had during this time.

Similar to many other resort hotels, the Bryn Mawr Hotel and its surrounding countryside possessed its own share of scenic landscapes and inspiring views. This was not lost on advertisers and writers, for lavish descriptions of the region in and around Bryn Mawr were offered by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company in its various forms of promotional writing, by the editors of The News of Bryn Mawr and by writers and local residents as well. In the railroad company's Summer Excursion Routes the landscape and vistas of the Bryn Mawr area are described thus:

...the view over the surrounding country is as enchanting as it is varied-forest alternating with field, modern villa with stately farm-houses, the beauty of untamed nature with the results of tasteful improvement, until the vision is shut in by the blue horizon.<sup>66</sup>

One can see that the surroundings of Bryn Mawr boasted the pastoral qualities so beloved by nineteenth century Americans. What is more, the Pennsylvania Railroad



traversing the landscape was truly a "machine in the garden,"<sup>67</sup> providing the kind of subliminal beauty which was greatly valued at the time. The picturesque and romantic descriptions that were published in popular and travel literature of the day as well as the actual landscape and terrain of the region were undoubtedly instrumental in attracting passengers and visitors to the Bryn Mawr region via the rails of the Paoli Accommodation of the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad.

### **The Resort Function Of the Bryn Mawr Area**

The country resort at Bryn Mawr was not the first resort of its kind to bring relief to Philadelphians. Mentioned earlier was the community of Germantown, which was frequented as early as the eighteenth century. As one observer stated,

Philadelphians who craved country air and more room to breathe, first went northward, because the journey by horse or foot to the city from the west and back again involved the sun in the traveller's eyes both ways.<sup>68</sup>

Whatever the actual reason was for the early development of the Germantown area over that of the countryside to the west of the city, the development of the latter region soon flourished as access to it was provided first by the curving tracks of the former Columbia, Lancaster and Philadelphia Railroad, then by the newly straightened





track along which Bryn Mawr was located.

As with other resort areas, the railroad played an important role in the development of the Bryn Mawr area as a resort locale. The resort function of the Bryn Mawr area originated with facilities such as the White Hall Hotel, which was a combination station and hotel built in 1859<sup>69</sup> and which reportedly housed "a gay crowd of Philadelphia's elite,"<sup>70</sup> various boarding houses and summer rental homes. This function was further enhanced by the 1871-1872 erection of the Bryn Mawr Hotel, which soon replaced the White Hall Hotel as a popular summer resort. Travel literature as well as classified advertisements and articles which appeared in local newspapers of the day illustrate the direct relationship which existed between the Main Line railroad and the resort function of the Bryn Mawr area. As promoted within the pages of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company Passenger Department's Summer Excursion Routes, the environs of Bryn Mawr were claimed to have occupied

a position in that doubtful region where no line marks the ending of city or the beginning of country; the benefits of one, the blessings of the other, contributing to the happiness of the resident. In every direction splendid roads lead through a section famed as well for its high state of cultivation as for the natural attractiveness of its scenery, while the byways of woodland and meadow invite delightful rambles.<sup>71</sup>



In addition, notices which were placed in the Philadelphia Inquirer illustrate the importance of the Paoli Accommodation of the Main Line railroad in attracting both new homeowners and summer boarders to the Bryn Mawr region. One notice listed the availability of a house for sale which had listed as its amenities "8 large chambers, with a stable, a lot of 2 acres [and a] 5 minute walk to the station" as its primary features.<sup>72</sup> Another house for sale was listed as "containing 11 rooms, with coach house, stable and 9 acres of land [and a] six minute walk from the station."<sup>73</sup> The inclusion of the distance between the houses and the train station are testimony to the influence which the Paoli Accommodation of the Main Line Railroad had in accessing and developing this particular rural region of Philadelphia for year-round and summer living.

The attraction of Bryn Mawr and its neighboring areas as a summer resort locale with proximity to the railroad is also evidenced by advertisements which were placed in the Philadelphia Inquirer by persons who were seeking instead of selling homes for summer rental purposes. While one family was advertising for "a furnished house at Bryn Mawr station on [the] Pennsylvania Railroad,"<sup>74</sup> another was looking for a

furnished house or cottage to rent on  
[the] line of [the] Pennsylvania



Railroad, near [the] station between  
Overbrook and Rosemont,<sup>75</sup>

which encompasses the area of Bryn Mawr. Local boarding houses within proximity to the railroad station were also prevalent, as evidenced by notices such as the one for Rosedale Farm in Bryn Mawr, which was within an "eight minute walk from Bryn Mawr station [and which invited] first class families and single gentlemen" to stay at the farm.<sup>76</sup> Once again the importance of the close distance between the summer homes and the railroad station is emphasized by such advertisements. In addition to the relationship between the railroad and its environs, this advertisement also indicates the type and socio-economic class of patron which was sought for this summer resort area.

Other advertisements for the rental and purchase of homes in the Bryn Mawr area were published in Philadelphia newspapers such as the Philadelphia Inquirer, the Philadelphia Press, and the Public Ledger, illustrating the apparent desirability of Bryn Mawr and its environs as a healthful country retreat. The desirability of this location existed as early as the 1860's as evidenced by the existence of the White Hall Hotel, local boarding houses and the appearance of newspaper advertisements. However, the attraction of the Bryn Mawr region as a resort destination was greatly enhanced after



the opening of the strategically sited Bryn Mawr Hotel during the summer of 1872 by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.

### **The First Bryn Mawr Hotel As A Railroad Resort Hotel**

The integral relationship which existed specifically between the Paoli Accommodation of the Main Line railroad and the first Bryn Mawr Hotel is illustrated in several ways, proving the important role which the railroad played in the promotion and ultimate success of the hotel. Not only did the railroad company conceive and construct the first Bryn Mawr Hotel, it was also the railroad company that provided the resort hotel with much of its patronage, either through its promotional devices or through the access to the hotel which the railroad provided.

One piece of literature entitled Summer Excursion Routes, in which directly below the description of the environs of Bryn Mawr, one finds mention of the Bryn Mawr Hotel, with a capacity of 450 people, as the only accommodation listed under "Principal Hotels." Adjacent to the description and mention of the Bryn Mawr Hotel is a full-page black and white engraving of the Bryn Mawr Hotel and its surrounding landscaping.<sup>77</sup> There is no doubt here of the existence of an integral relationship between the Bryn Mawr Hotel and the Pennsylvania Railroad, as both were advertised conjunctively in the same book.





Another piece of literature entitled Philadelphia and Its Environs and The Railroad Scenery of Pennsylvania describes the scenery of the countryside as seen from the windows of the train of the Main Line railroad, including the region along the route of the Paoli Accommodation. A description of the Bryn Mawr Hotel and its grounds is included and reads:

Our view of the Bryn Mawr Hotel...shows at once a palatial structure and the disposition of the buildings set down amid wide grounds as beautiful as wealth and taste can make them.<sup>78</sup>

The accuracy of this description of the hotel and its surrounding landscape is, at the least, questionable for it is unknown whether this book was promotionally written for the railroad company or else by an unbiased writer, simply describing the virtues of the scenery along the route of the Main Line. However, this portrayal of the hotel and its grounds does offer an idea of how the hotel appeared in 1875.

Besides promotional travel literature, the advertisements and articles which appeared in local newspapers also serve to illustrate the direct relationship between the railroad and the resort patronage of the Bryn Mawr area, presumably that of the hotel. The Philadelphia Press, in its promotion of Bryn Mawr, was quoted in the Bryn Mawr News as saying,



It seems that you have but to step into a train at Broad Street, look out a window an instant as the wheels whir beneath you and the brakeman calls in the door, before you have time to think: 'Bryn Mawr!' You catch a glimpse of its beauties from the station platform. But you don't know the joy of living till you've spent a week there. A week amid its pleasures, with the vim and action of city life merged into the seclusion and cool comfort of country life, is apt to be extended to two weeks, a month, the season. That's why Philadelphia's knowing men of wealth have reared beautiful country houses with striking architectural features and lovely lawns and wondrous gardens.<sup>79</sup>

In fact, the desirability of the entire Main Line area as a healthful resort increased as a direct result of the appearance of the Bryn Mawr Hotel on the local landscape by the summer of 1872. This is evidenced by the aforementioned advertisements for rental and fee simple properties which appeared in Philadelphia newspapers at the time. In addition, the construction of speculative housing presumably occurred in the area, as suggested by an advertisement which appeared in the Philadelphia Inquirer in the springtime of 1875 for the summer rental of two "new" houses. The construction of these homes was probably a result of developers' anticipation of a brisk market for summer homes in the Bryn Mawr area due to the presence of the new resort hotel there and the resultant increasing popularity of the area as a summer resort.

Older country seats were also being sold in Bryn Mawr



and its environs in the 1870's after the construction of the Bryn Mawr Hotel. Listings in the real estate column of the Philadelphia Inquirer included mention of an

elegant country seat, 9 acres, near Merion Station, Pennsylvania Railroad, on old Lancaster Road and new road to Bryn Mawr near the park.<sup>80</sup>

Another country seat near the Bryn Mawr station of the Main Line was listed in 1875 and included the following:

23 1/2 highly cultivated acres, a stone house [with] 13 rooms, every convenience, a stone stable, filled icehouse, outbuildings, etc.<sup>81</sup>

Whether or not the owners of such country seats relocated because of the burgeoning population of the area is unknown. Perhaps the owners of these real estate holdings realized the potential profit to be made from their sale as a result of the resort patronage of Bryn Mawr.

The Centennial of 1876 provided an additional drawing card for the Bryn Mawr area and, presumably, the Bryn Mawr Hotel. Besides the attraction of the Bryn Mawr Hotel and its country attributes, accessibility of the fairgrounds via the Main Line railroad was also viewed as being desirable. In May of 1876, notices were placed by persons, possibly fair-goers, seeking

a 10-room house near Bryn Mawr, either furnished or unfurnished, with springhouse and icehouse, stabling and lawn.<sup>82</sup>



Conversely, the Centennial and its proximity by rail was used by owners wishing to sell or rent their properties for the summer. In the same month "an attractive country seat" was listed for sale which was

one mile from [the] station on [the] Pennsylvania Railroad, 2 1/2 miles from Bryn Mawr [and] 25 minutes from [the] Centennial grounds.<sup>83</sup>

It is quite clear by the appearance of the many classified advertisements and written passages that the region surrounding Bryn Mawr was fully exploited for summer resort use by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, local newspapers, residents and patrons alike. Its increasing popularity in the post-bellum years can be attributed to a number of factors, many of which caused the successful growth of country resorts and their hotels nationwide as well. As described above, these factors include the attributes of Bryn Mawr such as: its beneficial atmosphere, elevated terrain, refreshing scenery and vistas; lively social life, and easy access by the railroad as well as the successful promotion of the rural area by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. It is somewhat ironic that a product of industrialization, the railroad, was the agent which made the healthful location of Bryn Mawr for either resort or rear-round dwellings more accessible to the urban dweller.





Summing up the various reasons for and the attractions of country resort life, some of which have been described above, is the succinct description found in an 1892 travel brochure published by the Ulster and Delaware Railroads, which serviced the numerous resorts located in the Catskill mountains. Expressing the sentiments which made country resorts so popular in the America of the nineteenth century, this passage states that

In the cities of the Temperate zones, summer is the most enticing season in the country, and the most repulsive and unendurable in the city. Business is dull then, and there is little excuse for remaining in town. Your wife is sick and tired of society and town gaiety, the children long for the annual romp amid the green hills and valleys...The whole family is gasping for fresh air and the country. The demon malaria threatens if you tarry, and the risk of delay is dangerous to assume. Thus it is, and wisely, that people dismiss their servants, lock up their town houses, pack up some necessary wearing apparel, and buy tickets for the mountains. Then, after a month or two of real country life, they return with renewed courage and vigor.<sup>84</sup>



## Notes to Chapter I

1. Caroline Lee (Whiting) Hentz, Lovell's Folly: A Novel (Cincinnati: Hubbard & Edmands, 1833), p. 6.
2. Richard Guy Wilson, "Nineteenth Century American Resorts and Hotels," in Victorian Resorts and Hotels, ed. Richard Guy Wilson (Philadelphia: Victorian Society of America, 1972), p.11.
3. Ibid., p. 14.
4. Letter from Thomas Jefferson to Dr. Benjamin Rush, September 23, 1800, in Memoirs, Correspondence and Miscellanies From Jefferson's Papers, Vol. 3., edited by Thomas Jefferson Randolph (Charlottesville: F. Carr & Company, 1829), p. 440.
5. According to John R. Stilgoe, in Borderlands (New York: Yale University, 1988), pp. 5-43, popular literary magazines in which articles appeared included Putnam's Monthly, the Atlantic Monthly. Entire magazines devoted to the subject included Rural Gazette and Home Book of the Picturesque. Authors which wrote often on the virtues of the country and the evils of the city were Susan Cooper, with her Rural Hours, Nathaniel Parker Willis with his Idlewild and E. H. Chapin with his Moral Aspects of City Life.
6. Leo Marx, The Machine In the Garden (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 4.
7. Ibid., pp. 4-9.
8. Henry Hudson Holly, "Advantages of a Country Life," in Country Seats (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1863), p. 21.
9. Bruce Laurie and Mark Schmitz, "Manufacture and Productivity: The Making of an Industrial Base, Philadelphia, 1850-1880," in Philadelphia: Work, Space, Family and Group Experience in the Nineteenth Century, ed. Theodore Herschberg (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981),p. 43.
10. Elisha Harris, "An Introductory Outline..." in Harvey Green, Fit For America: Health, Fitness, Sport and American Society (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), p.108.



11. Ibid.

12. Ibid., pp.77-100.

13. Richard G. Miller, "The Federal City: 1783-1800," in Philadelphia: A 300 Year History, ed. Russell F. Weigley (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1982), p. 181-182, and Joseph McFarland, "The Epidemic of Yellow Fever in Philadelphia in 1793 and Its Influence Upon Dr. Benjamin Rush," Medical Life, ed. Victor Robinson, 1929, pp. 459-462.

14. Note from Br. Benjamin Rush appended to Samuel Brown's "Prize Essay on Yellow Fever," 1800, in McFarland, p. 104.

15. It is interesting to note that according to McFarland, p. 466, an undated passage by Dr. Benjamin Rush claimed that the yellow fever was "only a higher grade of a fever which prevails every year in our city from vegetable putrifaction."

16. Charles E. Rosenberg, The Cholera Years (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 1965), p. 6.

17. Green in Fit For America, p. 12, discusses The Journal of Health, a monthly publication founded in 1829 for the general public as well as the medical profession. Unfortunately, this extremely influential magazine, especially among the medical professions, lasted for only four years. The editors, John D. Bell and D. M. Condie, were interested in the "properties of the air, its several states of heat, coldness, dryness, moisture and electricity." The Journal also addressed the effects of food and drink, exercise, clothing, and "bathing and [its] functions, and the use of mineral waters."

18. In the mid 1880's there was a noticeable decrease in the number of resort advertisements for both seaside and country resorts (including those in mountainous regions). In the early 1890's there were even less advertisements listed in the Philadelphia Inquirer, indicating either that resort hotels no longer needed to be advertised and had become commonplace in the American vacation experience or else had declined in popularity and fashion. Located in the classified advertisement section in a column entitled "Summer Resorts", such advertisements had become more numerous toward the middle of the month of May, peaked in quantity during June and July and began to decrease in number by the beginning of August. By September only a handful of advertisements remained in the Summer Resort column.



19. "The Advent of Summer," Philadelphia Inquirer, June 1, 1892.
20. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, May 27, 1873.
21. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, May 12, 1875.
22. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, May 27, 1873.
23. Summer Excursion Routes (Philadelphia: Allen, Lane & Scott, 1884), p. 34.
24. J. W. Townsend, The Old "Main Line", n.p., 1922, p. 58.
25. John Brinckerhoff Jackson, American Space (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1972), p. 227-228.
26. Elizabeth M. Geffen, "Industrial Development and Social Crisis: 1841-1854," in Philadelphia: A 300 Year History, ed. Russell F. Weigley (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1982), p. 318.
27. During the summer of 1866 the Philadelphia Inquirer published daily cholera watch columns. An example of such a column is that which was published in the August 15, 1866 Philadelphia Inquirer. It was reported here that due to the cholera epidemic, the following deaths occurred during a 24-hour period on the previous day, August 14th: 36 in St. Louis, 86 in Cincinnati, and 28 in New Orleans. Memphis lost 5 people during a 48-hour period, Savannah experienced 34 deaths in one week and New York had a death toll of 250 deaths for one week.
28. Letter from James Madison to James Monroe, September 15, 1793, Writings of James Madison, Vol. 6, ed. by Gaillard Hunt (New York: G. D. Putnam's Sons, 1908), p. 198.
29. Letter from Dr. Benjamin Rush to Julia Stockton Rush, August 21, 1793, in Letters of Benjamin Rush, Vol. 2., ed. L. H. Butterfield (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), p. 637.
30. J. H. Powell, Bring Out Your Dead (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1949), p. 230.
31. Jackson, pp. 227-228.
32. Jackson, pp. 227-228 and Stilgoe, p. 43.
33. Geffen, "Industrial Development," p. 319.





34. Ibid., p. 317.

35. Holly in Country Seats expands on the phenomenon of the country seat including its advantages, the different kinds of country seats available and desirable locations and architecture for the country seat.

36. Green, pp. 3-9.

37. Ibid.

38. Advertisement, Public Ledger, May 13, 1872.

39. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, July 3, 1873.

40. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, May 19, 1874.

41. "Summer Recreation," The Knickerbocker, (November, 1855), p.474.

42. July, 1859 diary entry by Sidney George Fisher in A Philadelphia Perspective: The Diary of Sidney George Fisher 1834-1871. ed. Nicholas B. Wainwright (Philadelphia: Winchell Company, 1967), p. 327.

43. Advertisement, News of Bryn Mawr, July 2, 1886, Pennsylvania.

44. Advertisement, Suburban Life, June, 1905.

45. Guidebook of the Boston, Concord and Maine Railroad in Jackson, American Space, p.104.

46. Ibid.

47. Alan Trachtenberg, The Incorporation of America (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), p.143.

48. "Vacation," Article in the Ardmore Chronicle, 1904.

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid.

52. Thorstein Veblin, Theory of the Leisure Class, Reprint edition, (New York: A. M. Kelley Bookseller, 1965).

53. Charles E. Funnell, By the Beautiful Sea: The Rise and High Times of That Great American Resort, Atlantic City



(New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1983).

54. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, June 21, 1871.
55. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, June 27, 1871.
56. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, February 5, 1872.
57. Homer Tope Rosenberger, The Pennsylvania and Erie Railroad: A Place in American Economic History (Potomac: Fox Hills Press, 1975), p.459-460.
58. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, May 21, 1871.
59. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, June 1, 1871.
60. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, July 12, 1892.
61. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, June 13, 1892.
62. Summer Excursion Routes, (Philadelphia: Allen, Lane & Scott, 1884), p. 34.
63. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, July 3, 1873.
64. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, June 21, 1871.
65. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, July 2, 1874.
66. Summer Excursion Routes, p. 34.
67. Marx, Machine in the Garden. This phrase is taken from the title of Marx's book.
68. Townsend, p. 7.
69. Theodore W. Bean, History of Montgomery County (Philadelphia: Everts & Peck, 1884), p. 32; Dianne Newell, in her "Short-Lived Phenomenon of Railroad Station-hotels," Historic Preservation, July-September, 1974, p. 31, discusses the phenomenon of the railroad station hotel of the latter half of the nineteenth century.
70. Townsend, p. 22. Not everyone shared the same opinions about the White Hall Hotel. According to Bromwell's New Railroad Guide (Philadelphia: J. W. Moore, 1854), p. 17, the White Hall Hotel "was a fine hotel, much resorted to by Philadelphians- why we cannot tell. Pure air! Fudge! Talk of pure air in a clay-flat like this- as well talk of raising potatoes in a snow-bank. Go to the mountains for pure air-go to Pottsville, six or eight-hundred feet above the Delaware, or go with us to the cloud-capped summit of



the Allegheny, and you shall taste pure air, fresh from heaven."

71. Summer Excursion Routes, p. 34.
72. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, April 15, 1875.
73. Ibid.
74. Ibid.
75. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, April 17, 1875.
76. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, April 26, 1875.
77. Summer Excursion Routes, pp. 34-35.
78. Philadelphia and Its Environs and the Railroad Scenery of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1875), p. 38.
79. Advertisement, News of Bryn Mawr, June 10, 1887.
80. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, May 18, 1874.
81. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, April 15, 1875.
82. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, May 1, 1876.
83. Advertisement, Philadelphia Inquirer, May 4, 1876.
84. Evers et al., p. 78.



## II

### The Main Line of Public Works

The Pennsylvania Railroad-that great artery of the state which conveys the blood from Philadelphia at the heart to the remotest region touched by its iron links, or traversed by its iron horses.<sup>1</sup>

In leaving Philadelphia on the Pennsylvania Railroad, rolling hills and winding streams and groves soon show the traveller that he is in God's land of rural glory.<sup>2</sup>

Although widely used today to describe a specific region of the suburbs lying west of the city of Philadelphia, the "Main Line" originally was an appellation for the once state-owned system of interconnected canals and railroads located in Pennsylvania, known as the Main Line of Public Works. Construction of this east-west transportation route began in the 1820's after much procrastination and amidst much controversy resulting from skepticism widely held by the public concerning the practicality and efficiency of the railroad as a means of transportation. Once constructed, the Main Line of Public Works was perceived and was referred to as the "spinal cord of the state," traversed the state of Pennsylvania, stretching from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh and





running through the centre of the Commonwealth and sending out long feeders, uniting the lakes and the ocean, gathering up the products of the teeming West,--the corn of Illinois, the wine of Ohio, the oil of Western Pennsylvania.<sup>3</sup>

The Main Line of Public Works was built in overlapping stages and by 1834 consisted of alternating sections of both overland railroad tracks and waterways in the form of canals (Fig. 2). The topography of the interior of Pennsylvania and its inherent conditions was instrumental in determining which portions of the transportation system would be canal and which would be railroad. At times such a varied landscape provided for a very interesting if inefficient and uneconomical system of transportation. As a result modifications to the Main Line of Public Works were made on an ad hoc basis between the years of 1826, when construction of the transportation system by the state began, and 1863, when it was completed by its new owner, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.<sup>4</sup>

Marked by an inauspicious and doubtful beginning, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company rose to become one of the preeminent railroad companies in the United States. By the latter half of the nineteenth century the railroad company and its vast network of tracks had made a lasting imprint on the landscape across the state of Pennsylvania, in both rural and urban areas alike. Closer to Philadelphia, the



railroad company, through its development tools and promotional devices, had a lasting effect on the popular perceptions of the rural areas lying west of the city and thus made great strides in accessing this region and influencing development there. Such was the case with the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and the westward lying countryside of Philadelphia as the relationship which existed between the two is examined more closely here.

### **The "Main Line"**

Although the term "Main Line" was routinely used by different railroad companies in reference to their routes,<sup>5</sup> the Main Line of Public Works of the state of Pennsylvania came to be commonly known simply as the "Main Line." Furthermore, the term is no longer used solely in reference to the westward bound transportation route between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh but has since been used to describe the geographical region of the Philadelphia environs through which the Philadelphia Division of the Main Line railroad were located.<sup>6</sup>

The Main Line of Philadelphia, which lay, and still lies, directly west of the city and extends for approximately nineteen miles to the town of Paoli, is a region of rich cultural, sociological and architectural heritage. The suburban communities which have grown up around the train stations and which lie adjacent to the



Main Line have been, and still are, the local homes of many prominent Philadelphians who have contributed significantly to the cultural, industrial and mercantile climate of Philadelphia throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Formerly consisting of small villages strung along the railroad in a linear configuration<sup>7</sup> with land separating each community, the Main Line has since grown into a well-developed suburban area in which each town has merged into the next and where there exist a great number of residences, commercial and institutional establishments. The stuff of literary works and cinematic productions; the Main Line of Philadelphia has become one of the best-known residential communities in the United States. In addition the Main Line is often associated with a higher than average socio-economic stratum of society with the lifestyle and standards of living to accompany it.

The story of the development of the Main Line specifically as a resort location at one time, cannot be told without a detailed, chronological account of the faltering development and construction of the Main Line of Public Works across the state of Pennsylvania and the eventual inception of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. Only through a detailed account especially of the Philadelphia Division of the state system, can the



tremendous power and the vast real estate holdings of the railroad company be fully recognized and its permanent impact on the landscape, including that of Bryn Mawr and the Bryn Mawr Hotel be fully understood.

### **The Main Line of Public Works**

After years of much controversy between the general public and the Pennsylvania State Legislature in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the eventual construction of the Main Line of Public Works was a direct, if not immediate, response to the languishing commerce of Philadelphia. The slowdown in Philadelphia's trade with other regions of the country was a result of the trade diversions caused by the Erie Canal, located in upstate New York. Opened for trade in 1825, the Erie Canal connected Albany in the eastern half of the state with the city of Buffalo in the western half, thereby providing access to trade with the West via the Ohio River and eventually the Mississippi River. These alternate routes to the West were threatening to be extremely detrimental to the well-established foreign and domestic commerce of Philadelphia. As such,

the Erie Canal to the North had drawn to New York the cream of commerce passing between the West and the seaboard; whilst the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad was threatening to turn the balance to the city of Baltimore by construction of a line from Cumberland, Maryland.<sup>8</sup>





It was the separate intention of both Philadelphia and Baltimore to develop trade routes to the Ohio River, from where all trade to the rapidly-expanding West could continue. Such rivalry between the two cities was not new; both cities had sought to control the Susquehanna River valley in central Pennsylvania since colonial days and continued to do so into the nineteenth century.<sup>9</sup>

### Optimism For the Railroad

Skepticism towards the value of the railroad over the canal as a means of inland transportation and domestic trade was difficult to conquer in the decade of the 1820's, as evidenced by the sluggish start of the westward route from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh. Efforts to obtain charters to construct railroads were made as early as 1811. In 1818 Colonel John Stevens of Hoboken, New Jersey, published a pamphlet entitled "Hints on the Expediency of a Railroad From Philadelphia to Pittsburgh,"<sup>10</sup> and in 1824 George W. Smith of Philadelphia published pamphlets, albeit anonymously, which compared the value of the railroad to the value of canals and roads as efficient means of transportation.<sup>11</sup> With the distribution of such literature advocacy for the railroad was becoming increasingly widespread by the middle of the 1820's.



Additional support for the use of railroads over canals was obtained by efforts of the "Pennsylvania Society For the Promotion of Internal Improvements in the Commonwealth," which was organized in 1824. In 1825, the Society sent William Strickland to England to study the development of the railroads in that country and to investigate the issue of the usage of the railroad versus that of the canal. His ensuing reports, which lauded the rapidity and efficiency of the railroad over that of the canal, resulted in reversing popular opinions in favor of the railroads.<sup>12</sup>

The inception of the Main Line system of canals and railroads across Pennsylvania finally occurred when Colonel John applied to the state of Pennsylvania for a charter to construct a railroad from Harrisburg to Pittsburgh in 1823. Colonel Stevens possessed much foresight for his time, envisioning the day

when this great improvement in transportation shall have been extended to Pittsburgh, then thence into the heart of the extensive and fertile State of Ohio, and also to the great western lakes, Philadelphia may then become the grand emporium of the western country...<sup>13</sup>

Despite his wish to construct a railroad from Harrisburg to Pittsburgh, Colonel Stevens was instead granted a charter to construct a railroad from Philadelphia to the town of Columbia, which lay on the Susquehanna River.



On March 31, 1823, "An act to incorporate a company to construct a railroad from Philadelphia to Columbia, in Lancaster County" was passed by the governor of Pennsylvania,<sup>14</sup> and a period of ten years was allotted for the completion of the railroad route.

The route from Philadelphia to Columbia was probably preferred to a route from Harrisburg to Pittsburgh in order to enable Philadelphia merchants to gain the advantage over Baltimore in the control of the Susquehanna River valley trade. Early surveys of the proposed railroad from Philadelphia to Columbia were made at the expense of Colonel Stevens due to a lack of state or private funding for the project and also due to widespread political opposition by supporters of the canal system. No one, including the directors of the new company, was interested in investing money toward such a risky endeavor. Because of the dearth of financial and political support, no further action was taken to begin construction of the railroad, and the charter was repealed by the state Legislature in 1826.<sup>15</sup>

### **Opposition To Construction of the Main Line**

Opposition to the construction of the westward bound railroad was keenly felt by politicians hailing from counties in the western half of the state. Towns located on the banks of tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay, such as



York, Lancaster, Columbia and Harrisburg felt no kinship to Philadelphia and claimed that they would derive no benefit whatsoever from a system of canals and rails which would originate in Philadelphia. Politicians of these towns advocated the formation of a transportation route which would serve as a connection to Baltimore instead of Philadelphia. They protested

against the restrictive policy that will enable the city of Philadelphia to command the trade of the Susquehanna County to seek an outlet...by way of Philadelphia... for the mere purpose of enriching her merchants at the expense of the farmers of the interior.<sup>16</sup>

With this predominating opinion based on geographical and economic considerations, the western counties of the state battled for the granting of a charter for the Baltimore and Susquehanna Railroad instead.

Additional opposition to the construction of the Main Line of Public Works was provided by farmers because of the threat of ruination of the market for horses, hay and grain. Townspeople feared that the passage of a railroad through their towns would result in an increase of building insurance rates. Tavernkeepers who thrived on the business provided by stagecoach and wagon travel contributed additional opposition as well as teamsters and hostlers who feared the threat of the railroad to their very livelihoods.





In the common landscape of the Philadelphia area this threat was especially felt by businessmen and tavernkeepers located on the Old Lancaster Pike over which a large number of farmers travelled en route to and from Philadelphia in addition to outbound Conestoga wagons, which travelled over the turnpike en route to the West. The sentiment of wagoners and hostlers are implied by the following song:

Oh, it's once I made money by  
driving my team  
But now all is hauled on the rail-  
road by steam.  
May the devil catch the man that  
invented the plan.  
For it'd ruined us poor wagoners,  
and every other man.<sup>17</sup>

As in Pennsylvania, skepticism, scorn and ridicule plagued advocates of the railroad elsewhere as well as in Pennsylvania. People were uneasy about the intrusion of the train into the landscape and were concerned for the quiet and peacefullness of their towns. In addition, they worried about the mental health of their inhabitants, exposed to "dangerous" speed, noise and steam. Exemplary of the feelings of rural inhabitants about the intrusion of the railroad is an anecdote which went thus:

In Connecticut, we are told, an eloquent divine went about lecturing in opposition to railroads, declaring that their introduction would necessitate the building of a great many insane asylums; people would be driven mad with terror at



the sight of locomotives rushing across  
the country with nothing to draw them.<sup>18</sup>

The rural inhabitants of the Philadelphia region undoubtedly shared some of these feelings as the railroad threatened to intrude upon their own local landscape and hence their daily lives.

### **The Inception of the Main Line of Public Works**

Despite such far-reaching skepticism of the general effectiveness of the railroad and opposition to the construction of the state-owned canal and railroad system, state Legislators of Pennsylvania became nervous enough with the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825.

Consequently, the Pennsylvania state legislature granted another charter on April 7, 1826, and incorporated the Columbia, Lancaster and Philadelphia Railroad Company.<sup>19</sup>

This newly incorporated railroad company subsequently became authorized to construct a railroad from Columbia, through Lancaster to the west side of the permanent bridge across the Schuylkill River in Philadelphia. Once again, no action was taken by the newly chartered Railroad Company. As a result, a Board of Canal Commissioners appointed by the Pennsylvania Legislature was given the authorization to begin its own preparations for the construction of a canal which would connect the Susquehanna River at Columbia with the Ohio River at Pittsburgh. Subsequently,



Major John Wilson was appointed by the Canal Commission to make the necessary surveys for a canal which would extend from the Susquehanna River to the Schuylkill River in 1827.<sup>20</sup> Once the state's Canal Commission assumed responsibility for the construction of the Main Line, the project became a state enterprise, one of the first of its kind in the world.<sup>21</sup> It was later decided that a railroad rather than a canal would be more practical to construct between these two points.<sup>22</sup>

Construction of the various sections of the Main Line of Public Works across the state of Pennsylvania began in the latter half of the 1820's and would continue for the next forty years. The various sections of this system were eventually called the Philadelphia Division, the Middle Division and the Western Division by the later owner of the state system, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. During the course of construction, many modifications to the route were made, including the replacement of canals with railroads, the re-routing and replacement of unwieldy inclined planes with more manageable routes, and the elimination of curvature of the railroad tracks in various places. A modification of the latter sort occurred in Bryn Mawr in 1869 and will be discussed further in Chapter 3, "The Development of the Bryn Mawr Tract."

Although integral to the development of the Main Line of Public Works and therefore important in our study of



the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and its wide sphere of influence, the story of the development of the Middle and Western Divisions of the state system are somewhat peripheral to the subject at hand. A more detailed account of the construction of what became the Middle Division and the Western Division is given in Appendix A. For the purposes of this paper, the construction and development of the easternmost section of the transportation system, the Philadelphia Division, will be highlighted.

It was along the Philadelphia Division of the Main Line of Public Works, which the Pennsylvania Railroad Company purchased in 1857 (see Appendix C), that a commuter train service was operated. This local commuter service extended westward from the train station in Philadelphia to the station at Paoli, Pennsylvania, and was otherwise known as the "Paoli Accommodation" (Fig. 3). The Paoli Accommodation of the Philadelphia Division will be given particular emphasis in this paper.

### **The Philadelphia Division**

In contrast to the Middle and Western Divisions of the Main Line of Public Works, which included both canals and railroads as part of the transportation route, the eastern section of the system consisted entirely of railroad track. Originally called the Columbia, Lancaster and Philadelphia Railroad,<sup>23</sup> this portion of track later





became known as the Philadelphia Division when the state system was purchased by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company in 1857. This section of the Main Line of Public Works originated in Columbia, which was located near Harrisburg, and terminated in Philadelphia (Fig. 3).

The Columbia, Lancaster and Philadelphia Railroad was incorporated in 1826 for the third time. At this time the state legislature granted the Canal Commission the permission to begin surveying the route and awarding contracts for the construction of this division of the Main Line of Public Works. Major John Wilson established the route in 1827, which, in fact, was the same route for which Colonel Stevens had been granted a charter in 1823.<sup>24</sup> Interestingly enough, it would be Major John Wilson's grandson, William Hasell Wilson, Esquire, who would purchase the land of the Bryn Mawr Tract on behalf of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company in 1869 and his great grandsons who would form the architectural firm which built the first Bryn Mawr Hotel, Wilson Brothers and Company.

Construction of the Columbia and Philadelphia Railroad was begun in April of 1829. By September of 1832 a portion of the Columbia and Philadelphia Railroad, that which extended westward from Philadelphia to Paoli, was completed and in full service. The official opening of this section of the Main Line was October 7, 1834.<sup>25</sup>



Skepticism of the power and ability of the locomotive steam engine still existed, especially that of the engines running on the Columbia and Philadelphia line. The ill-fated trial run of April 16, 1834 on the completed line furthered this sentiment. The locomotive engine "the Black Hawk," which ran from Columbia to Philadelphia, proved to be inadequate, and the failed motive power had to be supplemented by the men on board and by horse-drawn cars.<sup>26</sup> Traces of skepticism of the power of the locomotive on the Columbia and Philadelphia Railroad is evident in an early advertisement for the railroad which reads:

The locomotive engine built by M.W. Baldwin [Philadelphia] will depart daily when the weather is fair with a train of passenger's cars. On rainy days horses will be attached.<sup>27</sup>

Horses were used in supplement to the locomotives on this line until 1836.

Inclined planes were utilized at each end of the Philadelphia Division of the Main Line. The "Belmont Plane," which originated at the eastern end of the Columbia Bridge over the Schuylkill River in Philadelphia, was 2,805 feet in length and rose 187 feet in height. Near the terminus of the railroad line in the town of Columbia was a plane which descended for a length of 1800 feet and had a height of 90 feet and which terminated at



the canal basin in Columbia. These planes were costly as well as dangerous to use, and the abandonment of the planes in favor of a less dangerous and costly route was sought. For these reasons the West Philadelphia Railroad Company was incorporated in 1835, and the eastern end of the Philadelphia Division was altered. This alteration resulted in the departure of the track from its course at Ardmore where it continued to Philadelphia, by-passing the Belmont Plane and reaching the Schuylkill River at a point lying south of Market Street in Philadelphia.<sup>28</sup>

Alterations continued to be made on the Philadelphia Division of the Main Line railroad. Beset with problems early on, the operation of the West Philadelphia Railroad was assumed by the state Canal Commission who then completed the line. The use of the Belmont Plane was abandoned as of October 14, 1850 in favor of the newly completed section between Ardmore and Philadelphia and the Permanent Bridge on Market Street was altered in 1850 to carry a double track.<sup>29</sup>

An important occurrence in the gaining of power and the increasing usage of the Main Line of Public Works by the newly incorporated Pennsylvania Railroad Company (for an account of the company's incorporation in 1847, see Appendix B), was the 1854 construction by the railroad company of a passenger station located at 13th and Market Streets in Philadelphia.<sup>30</sup> The Pennsylvania Railroad



Company had acquired the rights to operate its trains over the West Philadelphia line and, along with an operating company named Bingham and Dock, leased and operated this rerouted section of the Philadelphia Division from the state.<sup>31</sup> With its own terminal located in Philadelphia and the newly acquired right to use the tracks of the Philadelphia Division of the Main Line, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company had significantly increased its power and leverage by 1853.

Repairs and modifications to the track were begun by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company on the eastern end of the Columbia, Lancaster and Philadelphia line starting in 1858. The most drastic modification which was made to the Philadelphia Division of the Main Line was the 1868 and one which ultimately would result in the construction of the first Bryn Mawr Hotel, was the rerouting of a two and a half mile section of the line between Athensville and Morgan's Corner. It was between these two stations, whose names were later changed by the railroad company to Ardmore and Radnor, that the station of Bryn Mawr would be located. This modification was made in an effort to straighten the track which, once accomplished, would "relieve the track from a considerable amount of very objectionable curvature."<sup>32</sup>

The straightening of the track resulted in a shifting of a portion of the track to an area directly north of





the new Lancaster Pike and running somewhat parallel to it. Construction for this rerouting project was begun in 1869 and was not completed until after 1870, as evidenced by a progress report given by the engineer of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company in 1870 which states:

The gradual improvement in the alignment of the old Philadelphia and Columbia Railway is still in progress and will be continued until the whole line is brought to the standard of modern railroads.<sup>33</sup>

The realignment of this section of tracks along the Philadelphia Division produced a chain of events which would drastically alter the landscape and character of the area, namely that of Bryn Mawr. The results of this realignment were the acquisition of a large tract of land; the erection of the station of Bryn Mawr; the subdivision of the tract of land into smaller building lots; the establishment of a set of building restrictions on the building lots; the construction of the Bryn Mawr Hotel on several lots of the tract of land; and the eventual sale of the subdivided building lots to private parties. All of these changes were effected by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company after the company was incorporated for a second, and final, time by state charter in 1847 and the Main Line of Public Works was purchased by it a decade later.

#### **The Paoli Accommodation**



As mentioned earlier, the division of the Main Line of Public Works which holds the most interest for this study is the Philadelphia Division, and in particular, the "Paoli Accommodation" of the Philadelphia Division. The Paoli Accommodation was the portion of the line which originated in Philadelphia and extended westward to Paoli, including the aforementioned modified section of railroad, located between Ardmore and Rosemont (Fig. 3).

The countryside and terrain through which the Paoli Accommodation of the Main Line travelled has been celebrated and lavishly described in a number of published sources. Christopher Morley, in his Travels In Philadelphia, has provided his reader with an idealistic description of the Paoli Accommodation, or the "Paoli Local,"<sup>34</sup> calling the trip a journey into some sort of an enchanted countryside. The passage in his book reads:

It is always puzzling to the wayfarer,  
when he has traveled to some sacred spot, to  
find the local denizens going about their  
concerns as though unaware that they are on  
enchanted ground...And even so does it seem  
odd to me that people are getting aboard the  
Paoli local every day, just as though it were  
the normal thing to do instead [of what it  
really is]- an excursion into Arcadia.<sup>35</sup>

Morley's poem about the Paoli Accommodation expresses his rapture as well:

Along that green embowered track  
My heart throws off its pedlar's pack  
In memory commuting back



Now swiftly and now slowly-  
Ah! lucky people, you, in south  
Who ride that caravan of youth  
The Local to Paoli!<sup>36</sup>

A full-page article entitled "The Advent of Summer," apparently written as a promotional piece by the Passenger Department of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and published in the Philadelphia Inquirer in 1892 offers a most picturesque description of the region to the west of Philadelphia including the Bryn Mawr vicinity, saying that

For miles out from Philadelphia are favorite summer residences. Immediately after leaving Philadelphia at Broad Street Station, and running on for about eight miles the line of the railroad in grade rises about 400 feet. The route is through a land of villas, with hill and dale and bits of woodland interspersed, and having pleasant brooks flowing through rich fields. In every direction are fresh scenes to attract the eye in this changing panorama of art-adorned nature.<sup>37</sup>

The pastoral and picturesque landscape preferences of nineteenth century America are quite evident in the excerpt above.

Established by the Pennsylvania Railroad "for the convenience of residents on the line between Paoli and Philadelphia,"<sup>38</sup> the Paoli Accommodation originally catered to local farmers, not commuters, in the early 1860's.<sup>39</sup> Whereas the trip between Paoli and Philadelphia formerly took a full day by Conestoga wagon, it was drastically shortened by the Paoli Accommodation. As more



people moved out to the country from the city in the 1860's and 1870's, the Paoli Accommodation, also known as "Laoli Pocal,"<sup>40</sup> was increasingly used daily by businessmen who commuted to the city from their homes in the country. The commuter service provided by the Paoli Accommodation was "quite convenient for men in business in the city who wish to reside a little out of town."<sup>41</sup>

The route was known as the Paoli Accommodation as early as the mid-1860's and continued to be called by that name after the realignment of the route at Bryn Mawr in the late 1860's, as evidenced by train schedules published in Philadelphia newspapers before and after the years of the re-alignment. The Paoli Accommodation initially ran six trains daily, or three in each direction, according to schedulling information published daily in the Philadelphia Inquirer in a column entitled "Railroad Items."<sup>42</sup> By the end of the nineteenth century, however, it was reported that as many as eighteen commuter trains of the Paoli Accommodation ran in each direction on a daily basis.<sup>43</sup>

The varying schedules of the Paoli Accommodation as listed in the Philadelphia Inquirer over the course of several decades reflect the changes which occurred in the rural regions of the Main Line area, presumably as a result of the increased access provided by the Paoli Accomodation. Here it is interesting to note that the train schedule as well as the column in which it was





printed was published in the newspaper as an item of widespread interest. According to the schedule published during the summer of 1866, the Paoli Accommodation departed Philadelphia three times per day, with these times being 11:00 a.m., 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.<sup>44</sup> By 1872 the Paoli Accommodation ran from Philadelphia to Paoli six times daily, with departure times listed in the newspaper as 6:20 a.m., 8:30 a.m., 11:10 a.m., 1:10 p.m., 6:40 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. Departure times for Sundays as of 1872 were 8:40 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.<sup>45</sup>

By July of 1873, the frequency of trains departing Philadelphia and arriving at Paoli increased by two, and the times shifted slightly to 6:20 a.m., 8:30 a.m., 10:50 a.m., 1:10 p.m., 4:45 p.m., 6:50 p.m., 9:10 p.m. and 11:30. A slight shift in Sunday departure times occurred as well; these were 8:50 a.m. and 6:50 p.m. Sunday departures were increased by one train in 1873 and were 7:45 a.m., 1:00 p.m. and 7:45 p.m.<sup>46</sup>

The gradual addition of trains departing daily from Philadelphia and travelling through the countryside toward Paoli between the years of 1866 and 1873 is evidence of the increasing popularity among both inhabitants and visitors to the country which occurred during this time. Whereas only three trains ran daily from Philadelphia to Paoli in 1866, by 1873 a total of eight trains travelled daily out to the country. The schedulling of



such departure times on the weekdays during certain hours of the day are evidence of the growing number of people living in the country and commuting daily into the city to work. Presumably, such businessmen would have taken the eastbound return trip of the 6:20 or 8:30 train to work in the morning and would travel home to the country at the end of the workday on the 4:45 or 6:50 westbound train. The increased number of trains leaving Philadelphia for the country on Sundays between 1866 and 1873 suggests the growing popularity of visiting the country by city residents for Sunday afternoon outings.

The coincidence of the increase in the number of trains departing for the country with the construction of the first Bryn Mawr Hotel in 1871 and 1872 suggests a linkage between the access provided by the Paoli Accommodation and the appearance of the resort hotel upon the landscape of Bryn Mawr in 1872. Such an increase in ridership to the country on the Paoli Accommodation, as evidenced by the addition of trains between 1871 and 1873, suggests that the Bryn Mawr Hotel served as a major attraction for weekend visitors, summer vacationers and permanent residents alike.

### **The Stations and Villages Along the Paoli Accommodation**

The landscape through which the trains of the Paoli Accommodation passed was vigorously promoted by the



Passenger Department of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. A number of publications were issued by the department in an effort to attract train travellers to use the company's services. Included among this literature was The Pennsylvania Railroad by William Sipes. Within the pages of this book are colorful descriptions of each station and its surrounding community and environs in order of appearance along the route of the entire Main Line railroad. Each station is discussed in terms of its distance from the origin of the line in Philadelphia and the local points of interest and statistics concerning each location. In other words, the different localities are seen within a spatial, landscape context and not merely as points upon a map.

In an effort to attract visitors and summer boarders to the area, and thus to the train service provided by the railroad company, several towns are touted by Sipes as being popular vacation destinations, including Bryn Mawr. The description of the stations along the Paoli Accommodation of the Main Line and their environs according to Sipes are given below beginning with the station located at Mantua, located in Philadelphia.

Mantua was the first station along the Paoli Accommodation and lay only two miles west of the Philadelphia station. This station was still within the city limits of Philadelphia and served as the junction



between the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad and its New Jersey Division. At Mantua connections could be made for travel to and from New York City via the New Jersey Division railroad.

Three miles west of the city yet still within the city limits was Hestonville. At four and a half miles lay Overbrook which lay on the county line of both Philadelphia and Montgomery counties. According to Sipes, the local attractions in the vicinity of this station included the College of St. Charles Borromeo. The station of Merion lay on the route five miles from the city and was located in Montgomery County, which was established in 1784 and has been generously described by Sipes thus:

The surface of the county is undulating, and the soil generally fertile and highly cultivated. Lying in close proximity to Philadelphia, and accessible by numerous lines of railroad, the advantages of its beautiful scenery, pure water, and salubrity of atmosphere have been extensively utilized by persons doing business in that metropolis, and magnificent country residences dot it in every part. A small portion of the county only lies on the line of the Pennsylvania Railroad; but this is charmingly picturesque, and is rapidly being transformed into a suburb of the great city.<sup>47</sup>

After the station of Overbrook was Elm, presently called Narberth. According to the description given by Sipes, Elm was a favorite locality for summer boarders,





with "superior accommodations for about 100,"<sup>48</sup> available in the vicinity of the station. Wynnewood was located six and one half miles from Philadelphia, and was described as the home of early Welsh colonists who settled and cultivated the farmland in the area in the eighteenth century.

Ardmore, which lay seven and one half miles from the city of Philadelphia was already established, with a number of churches, schools and halls located there. Of Ardmore, Sipes wrote the following:

extensive accommodations, both public and private [are] provided for summer boarders.<sup>49</sup>

Haverford, which lay on the Main Line approximately eight miles outside of the city, claimed the local institution of Haverford College as its main attraction and contained churches and two private schools as well. Industries were located in the vicinity of Haverford, including cotton and woolen mills. Sipes reported that:

during the summer season the public and private boardinghouses in the locality are well patronized.<sup>49</sup>

Bryn Mawr, at a distance of nine miles from Philadelphia had a passenger station (Fig. 5) that Sipes claimed "might well be cited as a model of taste and beauty."<sup>50</sup> About the Bryn Mawr station and its environs he



added:

Beautiful and comfortable station houses were built, and these were followed by a superb hotel and other improvements. Naturally these conveniences attracted visitors and residents, and from a scattered hamlet the place is growing into the proportions of an elegant town. Villas and cottages are springing up with wonderful rapidity, and it is altogether within the range of probability that Bryn Mawr will, in a few years, be one of the largest and certainly one of the most beautiful suburbs of Philadelphia [emphasis mine].<sup>51</sup>

The next station along the Paoli Accommodation of the Main Line was Rosemont, which was situated nine and three quarters of a mile from Philadelphia. According to the author, this town was also "patronized in summer by sojourners from the city."<sup>52</sup> Villanova, at a distance of ten and three quarters of a mile was located in Delaware County and was named after the Augustinian Villanova College located near the station. Four churches of Catholic and Protestant denominations were located in the vicinity as well, according to Sipes.

The station of Upton was next on the line at eleven and a half miles from Philadelphia, after which came Radnor, which lay twelve miles from Philadelphia and which contained two flour mills and a successful ice cream manufactory in the vicinity of the station. Following Radnor was Wayne, which lay fourteen miles from Philadelphia. Sipes credited Wayne with having a number of



churches, public halls, both public and private schools and a variety of industries and added that "the locality is a beautiful one, and is advancing rapidly in improvement." A town named "Louella" was said to have grown directly around the station at Wayne.<sup>53</sup>

The station which appeared next along the Paoli Accommodation was Eagle, which was located fifteen miles from Philadelphia in Chester County. At this point, Sipes extensively described Chester County and its history, saying that it was "highly improved and cultivated."<sup>54</sup> After Eagle, was Reeseville, at sixteen and a half miles from the Philadelphia station. Finally, the last station located along the tracks of the Paoli Accommodation was Paoli, at a location of nineteen miles from the Philadelphia station. Sipes found that "[Paoli] is beautifully situated on the edge of the great Chester valley, and is a favorite resort for Philadelphians."<sup>55</sup>

The flowery descriptions of many of these stations and the developing communities surrounding them was a typical advertising device used by the railroad company and its writers to advertise not only the Main Line, but the railroad company's various other routes as well. It should be noted here that the landscape, its beauties and healthfulness were perceived by the Passenger Department as important advertising copy. Since The Pennsylvania Railroad Company was published by the Passenger Department



of the railroad company it is quite probable that this book was commissioned by the railroad company or that William Sipes was even an employee of the Passenger Department. In any case, the descriptions were beneficial to the Pennsylvania Railroad Company's goals.

Another publication, Summer Excursion Routes, was definitely published by the Passenger Department of the railroad company and was probably widely distributed to encourage ridership of the lines of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.<sup>56</sup> Summer Excursion Routes listed both local and distant excursions that were available by making connections from the lines of the Pennsylvania Railroad onto trains and ferries of other lines. Interestingly, Bryn Mawr was listed in this book as a separate excursion itself. Generously praising the Bryn Mawr area, Summer Excursion Routes described Bryn Mawr as "one of the most delightful retreats to be found in...Philadelphia [emphasis mine]." <sup>57</sup>

Publications such as The Pennsylvania Railroad Company and Summer Excursion Routes, complete with their enticing descriptions of the stations and villages located along the Paoli Accommodation, were undoubtedly instrumental in educating readers about these places and subsequently were influential in persuading travellers and vacationers to ride the rails of the Paoli Accommodation to the stations and their surrounding resort areas. It is





evident from these various guide books and excerpts that country retreats did indeed exist in or near the villages along the tracks of the Main Line. Not least of these was the resort area at Bryn Mawr, highlighted by the first, then the second, Bryn Mawr Hotel.



## Notes to Chapter II

1. Men's News (June, 1896) in Reverend S. F Hotchkin, Rural Pennsylvania In the Vicinity of Philadelphia (Philadelphia: George W. Jacobs and Company, 1897), p. 110.
2. Hotchkin, p. 13.
3. Philadelphia and Its Environs and The Railroad Scenery of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co., 1875), p.111.
4. William Bender Wilson, History of the Pennsylvania Railroad (Philadelphia: Sherman and Company, 1895), pp. 1-165.
5. Evidence of this is the appearance in the "Railroad Items" column in the Philadelphia Inquirer. Other lines were also called the "Main Line," such as the Main Line of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad. These two Railroad companies were in competition with each other, which might explain duplicate usage of the term in the Philadelphia region.
6. Since before 1900 the area commonly has been called the Main Line as evidenced by references throughout a number of pieces of literature, including the various histories of the region.
7. John Brinckerhoff Jackson, American Space (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1972), p. 67. Jackson discusses in more detail the linear organization and integration of railroad-designed or similar towns lining the tracks of railroads.
8. William Hasell Wilson, 1897, in Joseph Tripician, "Role Played By the Pennsylvania Railroad in the Main Line Area of Philadelphia," August 2, 1960, p. 1, Lower Merion Historical Society, Rosemont, Pennsylvania.
9. John F. Stover, American Railroads, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), p. 12. Elfreth Watkins, in his History of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania Railroad Company, 1896) and A. J. County in Pennsylvania Railroad System also discuss this rivalry.



10. Elfreth Watkins, History of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania Railroad Company), 1896), p.46. This book was written and published for the 50th anniversary of the railroad company.
11. Frederick A. Cleveland and Fred Wilbur Powell, Railroad Promotion and Capitalization in the United States (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1909), pp. 55.
12. William Strickland, "Reports on Canals, Railways, Roads and Other Subjects" (Philadelphia, 1826), p. 31 and also Watkins, pp. 98-99. In his report Strickland stated, "In fact the introduction of the locomotive has greatly changed the relative value of the railways and canals; and, where a communication is to be made between places of commercial or manufacturing character, which maintains a constant intercourse, and where rapidity of transit becomes important, it cannot be doubted that railways will receive a preference in consequent of this very powerful auxiliary." In addition, Facts and Arguments in Favour of Adopting Railways In Preference to Canals, in the State of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: William Fry, Printer, 1825) was another publication which undoubtedly was instrumental in swaying public opinions toward the use of railroads.
13. Letter from Colonel Stevens to the public, 1823, in Watkins, p. 94.
14. Watkins, pp. 51, 101.
15. Ibid, p. 98.
16. Preamble and resolution relative to the Baltimore and Susquehanna Railroad, (1829) pp. 3-10 in Cleveland and Powell, p. 121.
17. Bromwell's New Railroad Guides, (Philadelphia: J.W. Moore, 1854), p. 19.
18. Lamb, "Glimpses of the Railroad In History," Magazine of American History, in Cleveland and Powell, p. 76.
19. Watkins, p. 100.
20. William Hasell Wilson, Notes On the Internal Improvements of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: Railway World, 1879), p. 4.
21. Ibid.
22. Watkins, p. 105.



23. The Columbia, Lancaster and Philadelphia Railroad was also called the Columbia and Philadelphia Railroad and also the Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad.

24. William Hasell Wilson, p. 4.

25. William Bender Wilson, pp. 1-77.

26. Ibid., pp. 12-13. There seems to be a discrepancy in the names of the first locomotive engine used for the trial run. Watkins has said on page 123 that the first locomotive was entitled the "Green Hawk" and the second was the "Black Hawk."

27. Edwin P. Alexander, The Pennsylvania Railroad Company (New York: W. W. Norton, 1947), p. 64.

28. Watkins, p. 141.

29. Ibid. p. 141.

30. William Bender Wilson, p. 172.

31. Alexander, p. 12.

32. Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Twenty-Fourth Annual Report (Philadelphia, 1870), p. 58.

33. Ibid.

34. This commuter service is often referred to as the "Paoli Local" today.

35. Christopher Morley, Travels In Philadelphia (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Company, 1937), p. 119.

36. Ibid.

37. "The Advent of Summer," Philadelphia Inquirer, June, 1892.

38. William B. Sipes, The Pennsylvania Railroad: Its Origin, Construction, Condition and Connections (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Railroad Passenger Department, 1875), p. 85.

39. George Langdon, "Evaluation of a Transportation Route as the Core of a Suburban Region," The Scientific Monthly (June, 1953), in Joseph Tripician, "Role Played By the Pennsylvania Railroad in the Main Line Area of Philadelphia," Lower Merion Historical Society, Rosemont, Pennsylvania.





40. J. W. Townsend, Old "Main Line", n.p., 1922, p. 21.
41. Philadelphia and Its Environs and The Railroad Scenery of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co., 1875), p. 38.
42. "Railroad Items" also published on a regular basis the schedules and information regarding the following railroad lines: Camden, Amboy and Philadelphia, West Chester and Philadelphia, Philadelphia and Baltimore, Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore and the Philadelphia and Reading.
43. Philadelphia Inquirer, May 28, 1866.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid., February 5, 1872.
46. Ibid., July 15, 1873.
47. Sipes, pp. 79-80.
48. Ibid., p. 80.
49. Ibid..
50. Ibid. pp. 81-82.
51. Ibid., p. 82.
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid., p. 83. There was eventually a hotel named the Louella Court, which was a popular resort hotel in Wayne.
54. Ibid., p. 84.
55. Ibid., p. 85.
56. Summer Excursion Routes (Philadelphia: Allen, Lane and Scott, 1884).
57. Ibid., p. 34.



### III

#### The Development of the Bryn Mawr Tract

Whew! Whew! Whew! How is real estate here  
in the swamp and wilderness?...Whew! Whew!  
I will plant a dozen houses on this  
pasture next moon, and a village anon.<sup>1</sup>

From its inception by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, the purposes for the construction of the Bryn Mawr Hotel were two-fold. First of all, the hotel was constructed to draw city residents to the country in order to acquaint people with the countryside for the purposes of developing the railroad company's newly acquired real estate known as the Bryn Mawr Tract. Secondly, the hotel was constructed in order to attract riders to use the Paoli Accommodation of the Main Line railroad.

The Pennsylvania Railroad Company was not alone in participating in such speculative real estate ventures, for large-scale land development by railroad companies was occurring in the vicinity of other large cities besides Philadelphia in the decades following the Civil War. This extensive land speculation, "represented an important development in our entire landscape"<sup>2</sup> and was certainly recognized by the architectural community who reported in the 1870's that

New York and Philadelphia have been the



scene of extensive operations in real estate within the last few years. In the neighborhood of both these cities, farms without number have been purchased by speculators and divided up into lots, which have been sold to another class of buyers, also speculators.<sup>3</sup>

The growing phenomenon of the "possession of untrammelled space"<sup>4</sup> by speculators and large corporations such as the Pennsylvania Railroad Company in post-bellum Philadelphia had an indelible effect on the common landscape in and around the farming village of Humphreysville, or what was to become, due to the influence of the railroad company, Bryn Mawr.

### **The Village of Humphreysville**

The town of Bryn Mawr developed near the former village of Humphreysville, which was named after early Welsh settlers in the area. Located in Lower Merion Township in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, Humphreysville, along with the remainder of Lower Merion township, was originally settled by Welsh Quakers who migrated to America in 1682 for the purposes of establishing a "Welsh Barony."<sup>5</sup> Welsh Quakers settled and farmed the area, and Lower Merion Township still contained a number of Welsh farmers well into the nineteenth century. By this time Humphreysville was comprised mostly of prosperous farmland as it had been since the 1700's, when, according to William J. Buck, "it was better cleared



than any other part of the country." The early prosperity of the region is also indicated in Buck's description of Humphreysville:

Humphreysville is near the Delaware County line, on the Lancaster Pike nine miles from Philadelphia, has 21 houses, a two-story public school-house and several handsome private residences.<sup>6</sup>

### **Acquisition and Subdivision of The Bryn Mawr Tract**

Humphreysville was not to remain a small farming village, however. During the years of 1868 and 1869,<sup>7</sup> the Pennsylvania Railroad Company purchased 424<sup>8</sup> acres of unimproved land from local farmers and residents of Humphreysville in anticipation of the straightening of the curved Columbia and Philadelphia railroad track between Athensville, or Ardmore, and Rosemont. The acquisition of this real estate, which cost the Pennsylvania Railroad Company a total of \$223,615.59, was simply reported by the Chief Engineer when he stated that "lands for stations, straightening the road and other purposes, have been added to the real estate of the company."<sup>9</sup> According to one source, the reason for the purchase of so much acreage was that the proposed right-of-way of the new railroad tracks would traverse the real estate holdings of a number of area farmers whose land would then be irreversibly affected. Heavy damages were reportedly claimed by these





landowners, causing the railroad company to purchase the entire tracts of land from them directly, thereby making the establishment of the new right-of-way less costly for the railroad company in the long run.<sup>10</sup>

According to William Hasell Wilson, Esquire, the Chief Engineer of the railroad company and the purchaser of the Bryn Mawr Tract, the motivation behind the purchase was slightly different. He has stated that

For the purpose of stimulating suburban travel, several tracts of land adjacent to the revised line of the Pennsylvania Railroad...were purchased in my name, and a town laid out in 1869.<sup>11</sup>

After the purchase of the land and the establishment of the new right of way by the railroad company, the tract of land was entitled the "Bryn Mawr Tract" or the "Bryn Mawr Estate"<sup>12</sup> after the estate name of Rowland Ellis, an original Quaker settler in the area.<sup>13</sup> It remains unknown exactly who chose the name, for several people have claimed responsibility for it. According to one source, Bryn Mawr was almost entitled "Brae Mar," but for the preference of the President of the railroad company, Edgar Thomson, who himself insisted on the name of Bryn Mawr instead.<sup>14</sup> William Hasell Wilson has also claimed credit for the name, saying that

When it became necessary to give a name to the town, I felt desirous to avoid the common-place hackneyed style of



nomenclature, and my attention having been drawn to the designations of the various early Welsh settlements in eastern Pennsylvania, I selected Bryn Mawr, which meeting the approval of the President of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, was adopted.<sup>15</sup>

The Bryn Mawr Tract originally consisted of seven smaller parcels of land, all of which were purchased from local landowners in fee simple by William Hasell Wilson between May of 1868 and March of 1869. These seven parcels consisted of the following: Tract Number One, or the R. N. Lee tract, comprised of 40 acres and sold to Wilson for \$28,573.12; Tract Number Two, or the Barrett Estate, consisting of 14 acres and sold for the price of \$10,469.33 and Tract Number Three, or the Nicholas Hart tract, comprised of 6 acres and purchased by Wilson for the sum of \$6,225.00. The largest parcel of land purchased by Wilson was Tract Number Four, the Thomas Humphreys estate, which consisted of 146 acres which cost Wilson \$31,184.06. Tract Number Five, belonging to Charles J. Arthur consisted of 17 acres and was purchased by Wilson for \$17,000; Tract Number Six, belonging to Joseph C. Turner, consisted of 47 acres and was purchased for \$17,500 and Tract Number Seven, owned by Benjamin Shank, was comprised of 9 acres and was purchased by Wilson for \$8,000 (Fig. 4).<sup>16</sup>

Not all of the land comprising the Bryn Mawr tract was purchased for the same amount of money per acre. The



land belonging to Nicholas Hart and Charles Arthur was the most valuable, costing the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, through Wilson, \$1,037.00 and \$1,000.00 per acre respectively, while the land of Shank, Barrett and Lee was slightly less valuable, costing Wilson \$889.00, \$747.00 and \$714.00 per acre respectively. The tracts with the most acreage actually cost Wilson the least amount of money per acre, these being the tracts of Joseph C. Turner at \$372.00 per acre and Thomas Humphreys at \$213.00 per acre.

Following the purchase of these adjacent parcels of land, the Bryn Mawr Tract was subdivided into individual building lots and a train station was erected adjacent to the railroad tracks in 1869 (Figs. 5 and 6). This station was said to have occupied "a delightful position in the midst of a fertile and well-watered country."<sup>17</sup>

The land formerly belonging to Lee contained 21 lots or portions thereof, Barrett's land was divided into 4 lots, Hart's land into approximately 8 lots, Humphreys' land was divided into 34 lots, Turner's land into 20 lots, Shank's land became 6 building lots and Arthur's was divided into 8 new building lots. Portions of the new Bryn Mawr tract remained undivided and were allotted for other uses such as the land immediately adjacent to the Bryn Mawr railroad station.<sup>18</sup> By purchasing outright these tracts of land during 1868 and 1869, the railroad company



was able to proceed with its project of re-aligning the railroad tracks and developing the Bryn Mawr Tract.

In attempting to regulate the quality of the development of the Bryn Mawr Tract, the Real Estate Department of the railroad company incorporated a number of building restrictions into the deeds of the individual building lots, establishing what can now be viewed as zoning restrictions. These restrictions were the first of their kind in the area and included the prohibition of manufacturers, stores, shops, livery stables, starch manufactories or a "building of any offensive occupation."<sup>19</sup>

The houses which were to be built on Montgomery Avenue had to cost not less than \$8,000 in their construction, and the houses constructed on other streets were to cost not less than \$5,000. Setback restrictions were also included in the deeds, which required homes to be situated at certain distances back from the street. In addition the construction of homes on the building lots had to be commenced within two years and completed within three years. Payment requirements were also established, allowing the owner to either pay for the property entirely in cash or else place one third of the amount in cash as a deposit, with the balance of the cost secured by a bond or mortgage. As such, these deed restrictions were reportedly made in perpetuity.<sup>20</sup> It is interesting to note here that





the Pennsylvania Railroad Company not only affected the landscape it traversed, but actively participated in town planning as well.

Another action of the railroad company was the erection of a small frame house on the northwest corner of Morris and Montgomery Avenues which was intended to house the architects and foremen involved with the improvement of the Bryn Mawr tract.<sup>21</sup> This house was later used to house the fledgling Baldwin School between the years of 1888 and 1896, thirteen years before the school would move into the second Bryn Mawr Hotel building.

#### **The Construction of the First Bryn Mawr Hotel and Other Improvements**

After the realignment of the railroad tracks and the subdivision of the Bryn Mawr Tract into building lots, the railroad company proceeded with their improvements to the land. These included the grading and macademizing of the streets of the tract; building a drainage system for the land; erecting fencing and constructing the foremen's house, all for a cost of \$82,837.06.<sup>22</sup> Before the macademization of the roads occurred however, the roads of the Bryn Mawr tract were roughly paved and provided slow and cumbersome travel. These roads and travel over them were described in a Main Line memoir as

covered with a course gravel from pea to



chestnut size and progress through it was a slow crunch, but it was a slow age and its inhabitants seemed to take inconveniences for granted.<sup>23</sup>

The general management of the property, including the care of the streets, drainage, sewerage remained the responsibility of William Hasell Wilson until 1886, when their management was turned over to township authorities.<sup>24</sup>

Author Kenneth Jackson has stated in his Crabgrass Frontier that

In the middle of the nineteenth century every city, every county seat...every wide place in the road with aspirations to larger size, had to have a hotel.<sup>25</sup>

This is true with Bryn Mawr as well, for the Pennsylvania Railroad Company had similar aspirations for their newly subdivided tract with the construction of the first Bryn Mawr Hotel.<sup>26</sup>

After the Bryn Mawr tract was created in 1869 and improvements to the land were started, the construction of the first Bryn Mawr Hotel was begun. The hotel and its drives were constructed on what is labelled as lots 35 through 39 and lots 83, 85, 86 and 87 of the former Humphrey tract (Fig. 4). One of the few instances of documentation in the records of the railroad company of the construction of the hotel building on the Bryn Mawr Tract appears in a report presented by the Chief Engineer



of Construction, who stated that "a building for a hotel has been erected at Bryn Mawr which is expected to be ready for use early next season."<sup>27</sup>

As scheduled, construction of the hotel and other improvements on the property were completed by July of 1872, and what was to be the first Bryn Mawr Hotel opened to receive its first guests during that summer (Fig. 8). The construction cost of the building was \$352,426.71 while the sewerage system for the hotel cost \$7,819.17 to install. The taxes and repairs made to the property prior to 1874 totalled \$10,339.38.<sup>28</sup>

### **Building Lots For Sale**

Coinciding with the opening of the Bryn Mawr Hotel during the summer of 1872 were attempts by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company to sell the subdivided building lots of the Bryn Mawr tract. Evidence of this attempt is an advertisement for the sale of "building lots" which first appeared in the real estate column of the Philadelphia Inquirer of the summer of 1873. According to this advertisement, "Choice building lots" were offered "at a reasonable figure and on accommodating terms..." by the real estate agent, Adam Everly.<sup>29</sup> As advertised, these lots were located

on the line of the Pennsylvania Railroad,  
thirty minutes from the depot at Thirty-



second and Market Streets, within easy access of the business portions of the city, and convenient for calls, shopping, nightly amusements, etc...<sup>30</sup>

After extolling the beauty of the country in which the building lots were located, the advertisement then states,

This is an excellent opportunity for men of moderate means to avoid the present high rents and taxes, and combine the conveniences of city life with the advantages of a country home, and also for those seeking a desirable investment, there being no locality where building lots can be bought with the prospect of so certain and rapid an advance of value...Its close proximity with hourly trains and the facilities afforded by the Market Street Passenger Railway; its delightful surroundings, and especially the improvements already made and determined upon by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, will tend to speedily enhance the value of all property here, and render it the most accessible and attractive spot for a suburban residence in the neighborhood of the city.<sup>31</sup>

The aforementioned restriction against the "erection of any building of objectional occupation" was also stated in the advertisement. Curiously, nowhere in the advertisement was it stated that the railroad company was the owner of the subject building lots. However, it can be surmised by the included mention of the improvements already made by the railroad company and the touting of the proximal location of the railroad to the building lots that Adam Everly was commissioned by the railroad company to sell this real estate on its behalf. The appearance of the





advertisement lasted only until the end of July, when it ceased to appear in the newspaper.<sup>32</sup> Later information concerning the remaining, unsold building lots appears in the minutes of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, lending evidence that not all of the lots were sold immediately, perhaps contrary to what the company may have expected.

The concurrence of both of these events, the opening of the hotel in the immediate vicinity of the lots and the advertisement of the sale of the lots, was no accident. Such simultaneous methods of attraction and advertisement were undoubtedly planned by the real estate department of the railroad company with the utmost precision. The hotel could be used as a lure for Philadelphians to visit the country for vacations and then, after they have become sufficiently acquainted with the area, the adjacent and encompassing building lots would hopefully be purchased by those interested in Bryn Mawr. The local Bryn Mawr newspaper, The News, participated in the advertisement of other building lots besides of those of the Bryn Mawr Tract. The inclusion of this advertising in local newspapers first of all illustrates the enthusiasm which the editor of the newspaper had in developing Bryn Mawr. Secondly, it shows that the railroad company had local support in this development venture. The News of February, 1886 boasted,



There are 100's of beautiful sites in Bryn Mawr on which to erect new buildings. There is not a more pleasant village in the state than Bryn Mawr...To visitors who are looking up a location to build, we say pay our town a visit.<sup>33</sup>

This logic was effective, for as of 1876, 171 1/2 acres of land of the Bryn Mawr tract had been sold, and the income which the sale of this land produced totalled \$216,868. The lots and their acreage which remained unsold and which were still owned by the railroad company as of 1876 were the following:

John Smith Farm	108.21
Strip west of Roberts Road	53.91
Lot south of [Railroad] on Penn Street	2.4
Town lots with 3 storey dwellings and 2 frame foreman's houses	30.11
Hotel Grounds	26.0
Occupied by streets and roads	31.83 <sup>34</sup>
	[Total= 252.46]

Despite the apparent popularity of the first Bryn Mawr Hotel, some parcels of land of the Bryn Mawr Tract continued to be on the real estate market as late as the 1880's.<sup>35</sup> Confirming this is a list dated June 19, 1885, which listed 33 remaining unsold lots including the dimensions, acreage and selling price for the building lots. Differing in size, these lots ranged in area from .69 of an acre to 1.89 acres. Typical dimensions of building lots on the Bryn Mawr Tract were: 150 feet wide by 200 feet deep and 172 feet wide by 320 feet deep. Larger lots were typically 150 feet wide by 488 feet deep



and 208 feet wide by 200 feet deep. The prices for these unsold lots ranged from \$2,000 to \$5,000.<sup>36</sup>

In one or more cases original lots which were intended to be quite large were further subdivided to provide a greater number of smaller lots. This is evidenced by a letter from the Chief Engineer of the railroad company, William Hasell Wilson, to Wistar Morris, the Real Estate Agent of the company, which describes the redistribution of a parcel land originally containing 3 lots to one containing 5 smaller lots.<sup>37</sup> The reasons for this particular subdivision remain unknown. It is possible that the lots, as offered, were too large in size or too costly in price. The selling price of the lots that were sold in the 1880's, however, reflected the fact that for some buyers the cost of the lots was not too prohibitive, for a number of these lots were sold at prices which ranged between \$2,000 and \$5,000.<sup>38</sup>

Aggregate building lots were sold to parties as well as individual ones. A Dr. J. Taylor purchased 10 lots for a total of \$25,000, of which \$15,000 was paid in cash. Conditioned upon the sale of these lots was the stipulation that the the construction of a women's college was to be commenced within five years and finished within seven years.<sup>39</sup> This women's college was to become the well-respected Bryn Mawr College. Whether the originator of the plans for the college was Dr. Taylor or the



Pennsylvania Railroad Company remains unknown. Another customer sought to purchase two adjacent lots with the intention of constructing one large house on the combined lots. Evidence of this is

an offer...made by a reliable party for the purchase of lots 28 and 29, [2.39 acres], at Bryn Mawr at a price of \$7,000 on the condition that only one house shall be required on the 2 lots. The intention if the offer be accepted, is to erect a handsome house...<sup>40</sup>

The offers for multiple lots is evidence that there was a real estate market for the construction of both residential or resort facilities on large properties as well as a market for other kinds of facilities, such as educational facilities. It also indicates the increasing desirability of the Bryn Mawr area to outsiders wishing to establish a residence or institution there. The fact that Dr. Taylor, as well as Miss Florence Baldwin, of The Baldwin School, desired to establish schools in Bryn Mawr is testimony to the increasing population there, and hence, of a market for quality educational facilities such as these.

The formation of the Bryn Mawr tract in 1868 and 1869 and the ensuing subdivision of lots; the construction of function-specific buildings; and the improvements which were made upon the land in order to promote development of real estate interests according to pre-determined high





standards is testimony to the astuteness which the Real Estate Department of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company possessed. The activity in areas other than the operation of the railroad itself is evidence of the breadth of the interests as well as the phenomenal power which the Pennsylvania Railroad Company had acquired by the decades of the 1860's and the 1870's.

### **The Effects of the First Bryn Mawr Hotel on the Community**

The popularity of the first Bryn Mawr Hotel and the clientele which it attracted contributed considerably to the increasing population of Bryn Mawr. Whereas Humphreysville reportedly contained 21 houses in 1858, Bryn Mawr contained more than 300 houses in 1884.<sup>41</sup> Real estate prices rose rapidly as a result of the increasing popularity of the Bryn Mawr area as well. For example, a farm of over one hundred acres located on the Lancaster turnpike and with a number of well-built outbuildings was sold in 1847 for one hundred dollars per acre. In 1868 at the commencement of the development of the Bryn Mawr Tract by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, sixty two acres of the same farm were purchased for as much as seven hundred and thirty dollars per acre, which was the average price per acre at the time. In just another few years, the price of land per acre was more than double than even that amount.<sup>42</sup>



The influence of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company upon the landscape of Humphreysville and the growth which the community experienced immediately following the railroad company's land acquisition, subdivision and building improvements cannot be denied here.

### **The Suburb of Bryn Mawr**

By the turn of the century, the Bryn Mawr area had attained suburban residential status in addition to its status as a summer resort. The ongoing development of Bryn Mawr into a suburban community (Fig. 7) was undoubtedly aided by the presence of the second Bryn Mawr Hotel upon the same site as the first hotel. The acceptance of the label for the community as "suburban" rather than "country" by the populace is partially illustrated by an advertisement in a March 1904 issue of the Ardmore Chronicle which contained a "Rent List" of summer rental properties for the Main Line area, including Merion, Narberth, Ardmore, Haverford and Bryn Mawr. Whereas former advertisements for summer vacation properties always used the term "country" to describe the location of their boarding house or hotel, this particular advertisement describes the locale of its listings as being suburban in nature. As listed these properties were

for those anxious to seek the suburban  
settlements as a place of residence



during the coming spring and summer.  
[emphasis mine]<sup>43</sup>

The evolution of the resort community into a suburban one was a natural consequence of its immense popularity first as a summer resort area, then as a growing residential community.

Although Bryn Mawr was popularly perceived as a "suburb" by the early 1900's, it must have retained some of its original agricultural ambience. The following description of the region illustrates the fact that despite the onslaught of people into the farming community and the subsequent changes which they had wrought, traces of the agrarian lifestyle still existed in Bryn Mawr after the turn of the century. These perceived vestiges, as described below, apparently were still to be found if one looked hard enough:

The country is a fertile farming country, with many brooks running through it, with many little valleys where the snow lingers unmelted in the spring time, and many rising knolls from which to get a pleasant outlook over meadow and woods. The original farmhouses have now been replaced by big stone mansions, and the simple country folk by denizens of the city who have turned the countryside into a park, planting hedges of scarlet-flowering pyrus japonica, setting out fragrant magnolia trees and gorgeous rhododendrons and training the festooning honeysuckle over many a trellis. However, in certain corners well-known to the youthful pedestrian, the farmer is still to be seen driving his plough with its patient, slow-moving horses; cattle graze in the deep



grass; and sheep nibble all day long under gnarled apple boughs.<sup>44</sup>

Furthermore, a later passage which is presumably describing the still rural landscape surrounding Bryn Mawr College (whose grounds were in close proximity to the second Bryn Mawr Hotel and Miss Baldwin's School), refers to "the contrast between the rich black of new ploughed fields and the vivid green of winter wheat."<sup>45</sup> This description serves to suggest that as of approximately 1901, farming still did exist in the community of Bryn Mawr.

Eventually the communities which were dotted along the Main Line railroad merged with each other so that the boundaries of each one became indistinguishable. According to one observer in 1918,

Suburban towns stand in such a continuous built up sequence as to make it impossible to see where the city ends and the suburbs begin, or where suburb merges into suburb.<sup>46</sup>

By this date, the suburbs were regarded as terminating at a point fifteen miles from the center of Philadelphia. Surprisingly and significantly, this suburban sprawl was not viewed disparagingly by the commentator as one would expect but with admiration instead, as illustrated by his comment concerning the Main Line communities:

Suburban towns of the Main Line are one





continuous settlement with a general  
effect of charming homes set in charming  
environments.<sup>47</sup>

In this manner the rural Welsh farming village of Humphreysville evolved into a populous, built-up suburban community, as a result of the far-reaching influence of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and its various operations in the area. As a consequence of these operations, be they railroad, real estate or resort related, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company effectively transformed the landscape of this region from that which contained the small, rural village of Humphreysville in the middle of the nineteenth century to one in which was located the well-developed, suburban community of Bryn Mawr at the turn of the twentieth century.



### Notes to Chapter III

1. Ralph Waldo Emerson in 1840's Journal, in Leo Marx, The Machine In the Garden, (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 17.
2. John Brinckerhoff Jackson, American Space (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1972), p. 20.
3. Ibid., p. 67.
4. Ibid., p. 30.
5. Samuel Fitch Hotchkiss, Rural Pennsylvania In the Vicinity of Philadelphia, (Philadelphia: George W. Jacobs and Company, 1897), p. 142.
6. William J. Buck, History of Montgomery County (Norristown: E. L. Acker, 1859), p. 61.
7. Brief of Title to Bryn Mawr in Lower Merion Township (Philadelphia: A.C. Bryson & Company, 1869), Hagley Museum Archives, Wilmington, Delaware and also the Montgomery County Historical Society, Norristown, Pennsylvania.
8. "Statement of the Bryn Mawr Estate," June 1, 1876, Records of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Hagley Museum Archives, Wilmington, Delaware. The 424 acres purchased by the railroad company were not all included within the Bryn Mawr Tract. Some land was located in Haverford as well, as evidenced by the Minutes cited above. The number of acres as described in the Brief of Title total 279 acres instead.
9. Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Twenty Fourth Annual Report of the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company (Philadelphia: E. C. Markley & Son, 1871), p. 61.
10. J. W. Townsend, The Old "Main Line", n.d., 1922, Ludington Library, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, p. 51. No account of the purchase of this land was found in the minutes of the company. However a number of histories offer the same account of the reasons for the purchase of the land. Townsend's personal reminiscences in his book may very well have been the original source for the account in subsequent histories.



11. William Hasell Wilson, 1897, in Joseph F. Tripician, "Role Played by the Pennsylvania Railroad in the Main Line Area of Philadelphia," August 2, 1960, Lower Merion Historical Society, Rosemont, Pennsylvania.
12. The terms "Bryn Mawr Estate," "Bryn Mawr Tract" and "Bryn Mawr place" are used interchangeably throughout the references in the Minutes of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and in a number of other sources about the history of the area as well.
13. Rowland Ellis' estate in Wales was also named "Bryn Mawr," which means "high ground."
14. Hotchkin, p. 142.
15. William Hasell Wilson, 1897, in Tripician.
16. Brief of Title to Bryn Mawr.
17. William B. Sipes, The Pennsylvania Railroad: Its Origin, Construction, Condition and Connections (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Railroad Passenger Department, 1875), p. 81.
18. Brief of Title to Bryn Mawr.
19. Townsend, p. 51.
20. Ibid.
21. In his Old "Main Line", Townsend attributes this house as being constructed for lot buyers while their homes were being constructed. However the Pennsylvania Railroad Company Minutes mention the existence and repairs to a foreman's house.
22. "Statement of the Bryn Mawr Estate," June 1, 1876.
23. Townsend, p. 60.
24. William Hasell Wilson, 1897, in Tripician.
25. Kenneth T. Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 253.
26. The first hotel which was erected at Bryn Mawr is sometimes referred as the Keystone Hotel, named after the managing company which operated it, the Keystone Hotel Company. To avoid confusion in this paper, the names of both hotels will remain simply the "first" and "second"



Bryn Mawr Hotel.

27. Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Twenty-Fifth Annual Report of the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company to Stockholders (Philadelphia: E. C. Markley & Son, 1872), p. 55.

28. "Statement of the Bryn Mawr Estate," June 1, 1876.

29. Advertisement in Philadelphia Inquirer, June 16, 1873. Besides this real estate advertisement, no other connection has been established between Adam Everly and the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.

30. Ibid. It is interesting to note that this advertisement was addressed to "men of moderate means," yet the railroad company was attempting to draw more well-to-do people out to the country. Somewhat false advertising such as this was clearly meant to initially lure a wide audience of people.

31. Ibid.

32. The reason for the discontinuance of the advertisement is questionable. Building lots of the Bryn Mawr tract were not all sold right away, with some number of them remaining unsold well into the 1880's. No other advertisements for the Bryn Mawr Tract appeared in the Philadelphia Inquirer again.

33. Advertisement, The News of Bryn Mawr, February 26, 1886. Montgomery County Historical Society, Norristown, Pennsylvania.

34. "Statement of the Bryn Mawr Estate," June 1, 1876.

35. Miscellaneous deeds of sale between Pennsylvania Railroad Company and buyers, Records of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Hagley Museum Archives, Wilmington, Delaware.

36. "List of Unsold Lots in Bryn Mawr," June 19, 1885, Records of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Hagley Museum Archives, Wilmington, Delaware.

37. Letter from William H. Wilson to Wistar Morris, June 8, 1885, Records of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Hagley Museum Archives, Wilmington, Delaware.

38. Miscellaneous deeds of sale, Records of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Hagley Museum Archives, Wilmington, Delaware.





39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

41. Theodore W. Bean, History of Montgomery County (Philadelphia: Everts & Peck, 1884), p. 924.

42. William Hasell Wilson, 1897, in Tripician, p. 10.

43. Advertisement, Ardmore Chronicle, March 12, 1904. Montgomery County Historical Society, Norristown, Pennsylvania.

44. Helen Thomas Flexner, "Bryn Mawr-A Characterization," 1908, Pennsylvania Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

45. Margaretta Morris and Louise Buffum Congdon, eds., A Book of Bryn Mawr Stories (Philadelphia: George W. Jacobs & Company, 1901), pp. 122-123.

46. Robert Shackleton, The Book of Philadelphia (Philadelphia: Penn Publishing Company, 1918), p. 108.



## IV

### The First Bryn Mawr Hotel

The delightful locality, its convenience to the city and the efficient management of the house soon became known...guests of the first class eagerly placed their names on its book. Its popularity grew and the profits increased.<sup>1</sup>

Almost since it first opened...the hotel has been a place of great social interest. Many handsome and elegant entertainments having been given. There is probably no summer hotel close to a large city so well known. Hundreds of celebrities who have visited Philadelphia have been made acquainted with its free and cordial yet elegant social life.<sup>2</sup>

"The magnificent hotel at Bryn Mawr,"<sup>3</sup> located in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, was first constructed by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company for use by its patrons. Constructed between the years of 1871 and 1872, the Bryn Mawr Hotel was located within 1/2 mile of the Bryn Mawr railroad station on the 25 acre Bryn Mawr Tract which the railroad company had purchased prior to its straightening of the Columbia, Lancaster and Philadelphia Railroad in 1869. Designed by Joseph Miller Wilson,<sup>4</sup> the four-storied stone masonry and wood structure housing the first Bryn Mawr Hotel was opened for its first summer season during July of 1872 (Fig. 8).



## The Keystone Hotel Company

Although constructed by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, the Bryn Mawr Hotel was managed by one of its subsidiary companies, the Keystone Hotel Company. Incorporated in 1866, the Keystone Hotel Company was created in order to

accommodate travellers with lodging and board and to manage and carry on the business of keeping the same as and for Hotel purposes.<sup>5</sup>

The new company issued \$200,000 worth of stock divided into shares of \$100 each to a total of 11 subscribers. These initial subscribers included the following men:

James M. Rorer  
T.U. Adams  
Robert F. Kennedy  
E. Y. Townsend  
John J. Kille'  
Pennsylvania Railroad Company  
John M. Kennedy  
John C. Biddle  
U. J. Howard  
Josiah Bacon  
Edmund Smith <sup>6</sup>

The original directors of the Keystone Hotel Company, who were voted into office on July 12, 1866 were

T. U. Adams  
William J. Howard  
John T. Kille'  
Edward C. Biddle,<sup>7</sup>  
John M. Kennedy



with the complete list of all the directors of the company from 1866 to 1910 being thus:

T. M. Adams  
N. J. Howard  
John T. Kille'  
Edward C. Biddle  
J. M. Kennedy  
E. H. Williams  
J. McL. Creighton  
H. J. Lambacet  
Washington Butcher  
N. P. Shortridge  
Wistar Morris  
E. Y. Townsend  
E. J. Unger  
T. A. Scott  
J. N. DuBarry  
Strickland Kneass  
J. P. Wetherill  
Henry D. Welsh  
Charles E. Pugh 8

Many of these original stockholders were prominent businessmen of the Philadelphia area who were active in a variety of both mercantile and industrial fields. The nature of the occupations of these men and also the close connection which existed between some of them and the railroad company is important to remember here. Of the names of the original stockholders which were listed in McElroy's Philadelphia Directory of 1860, three were listed as merchants of either dry goods or food products. These included a T. U. Adams, who was listed in the directory as a grocer, E. Y. Townsend who was listed as a dry goods merchant, and John M. Kennedy who was listed as a fish distributor. Two names were listed as being





involved with the manufacture of iron. These names included, again, E. Y. Townsend and John J. Kille', who was listed as the Secretary and Treasurer of the Cambria Iron Works.<sup>9</sup> One name, Edward C. Biddle was listed as being the president of the Westmoreland Coal Company. In addition to the entity of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company owning shares of stock in the Keystone Hotel Company, Edmund Smith was listed as being Secretary of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company at the time. Interestingly and significantly, Josiah Bacon and John M. Kennedy, individually listed shareholders of the Keystone Hotel Company, would be future directors of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company as well.

The strong presence of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company within the ownership structure of the Keystone Hotel Company is also evident in a list of the original stock subscribers and the amount of shares which each stockholder possessed. While 10 of the individual subscribers were listed as holding only 10 shares of stock per shareholder, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company was listed as owning 500 shares of stock.<sup>10</sup> Such ownership of the hotel and restaurant operating company by the railroad conglomerate is inarguable evidence of the integral relationship which existed between the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and the Bryn Mawr Hotel and also of the vast sphere of control which the railroad company



continued to enjoy in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

An additional connection which existed between the parent company and its subsidiary is the exchange of directors which occurred between the two companies. Several of the original directors of the Keystone Hotel Company would also hold directorate positions with the railroad company. These included Wistar Morris, John M. Kennedy and N. Parker Shortridge. Such an exchange of directors between the Keystone Hotel Company and the Pennsylvania Railroad Company is testimony to the interconnection which existed within the management structures of the parent company and its subsidiary.

The Keystone Hotel Company apparently managed the operations of the Bryn Mawr Hotel from its inception in 1872, which is evidenced by a discussion of the expenses and receipts of the hotel from 1872 in the minutes of the directors' meetings of the Keystone Hotel Company.<sup>11</sup> Any mention of an arrangement between the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and the Keystone Hotel Company pertaining to the general management of the hotel, however, does not appear in the minutes of the Keystone Company until July of 1876,<sup>12</sup> where it was reported that the Keystone Company leased from the Pennsylvania Railroad Company the Union Depot Hotel in Pittsburgh, the Logan House in Altoona, the Bryn Mawr Hotel in Bryn Mawr, the restaurant in the West



Philadelphia depot and the restaurant in the Jersey City depot in New Jersey, all for a yearly rental rate of \$30,000, payable in monthly installments. This yearly rental fee was later decreased to \$25,000 per year,<sup>13</sup> yet rose again to \$30,000 during the 1881 season.<sup>14</sup> The Keystone Hotel Company also operated the Mountain House hotel at Cresson Springs, Pennsylvania, although that hotel was owned not by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company but by the Cresson Springs Company instead.<sup>15</sup>

Although the majority of the stock of the Keystone Hotel Company was held by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, the two companies were independent of each other on paper and initially in their operations. However, the hotel and restaurant management company increasingly turned to its parent company for funds to meet the "necessities of [the] company" for expenses incurred at the various hotels and restaurants<sup>16</sup> so that by 1876 the Keystone Hotel Company was indebted to the railroad company for a sum of over \$83,000. In an attempt to adjust the account between the Keystone Hotel Company and the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, a motion was made by the Keystone Hotel Company in June of 1876 to issue all of its stock to the railroad company.<sup>17</sup> Instead, it was decided to settle the account by issuing 400 more shares of the Keystone Hotel Company to the Pennsylvania Railroad Company in full payment of the debt.<sup>18</sup>



After this settlement the Keystone Company continued to borrow money from the railroad company for physical improvements as well as cosmetic ones, including those made at the Bryn Mawr Hotel. Cosmetic improvements to the hotel included the purchase of over \$17,000 worth of furniture,<sup>19</sup> for which the Keystone Company received an advance of \$3,750 from the railroad company.<sup>20</sup> These improvements were presumably made in anticipation of the crowds which would be generated by the nearby Centennial. Again, the continuance of cash advances made to the Keystone Hotel Company by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company illustrates the interwoven relationship which existed between the two companies and especially the increasing dependency which the Keystone Company had on its parent company.

The tight control which the Pennsylvania Railroad Company had on the purse strings of the Keystone Hotel Company is further illustrated by later correspondence between J. R. Wood, who was both the General Passenger Agent of the railroad company and the president of the Keystone Hotel Company, and George B. Roberts, the president of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. In this correspondence Wood and Roberts discuss who should maintain and collect the rental fees of the restaurant and hotel equipment, the Keystone Hotel Company (who actually owned the equipment) or the Pennsylvania Railroad





## Immediate Success

It is evident that the Bryn Mawr Hotel may have achieved popularity immediately following the opening of the resort hotel. Evidence of this popularity and of the confidence of the continuance of its success is the immediate expansion and renovation of the facility by the railroad company after the close of its very first summer season in 1872. This expansion included the addition of the north[west] wing of the building and was comprised of a kitchen with several rooms located directly above it. Such an addition would not have been made had not the hotel exhibited early signs of financial success.

Another suggestion of the immediate popularity of the Bryn Mawr Hotel area can be found in an advertisement for the sale of building lots in Bryn Mawr in the Philadelphia Inquirer already mentioned above. This advertisement first appeared in the real estate column of the classified section of the Philadelphia Inquirer from June 16, 1873 until the end of July of the same summer. The advertisement, which remained in the same format and wording for the two months that it appeared, says that

the above facts [regarding the amenities] are sustained by the increasing partiality evinced by the public for Bryn Mawr. The demand for accommodations for the coming summer at the New Hotel and Boarding



Houses [were] far beyond their capacity.<sup>22</sup>

These claims as well as those mentioned in the beginning of this chapter would not have been made if the resort was not exhibiting at least some signs of prosperity and popularity.

In anticipation of the tourism which would be provided by the proximity of the Centennial of 1876 in Philadelphia, the manager of the Bryn Mawr Hotel at that time, David Ruth,<sup>23</sup> erected the "Centennial Wing" in 1875. Constructed at a cost of \$25,000, this wing included an open "arena" on the first floor and was attached to the remainder of the building on the upper floors.<sup>24</sup> The expenditure of this amount of money for an addition would not have been made if the popularity and financial success of the hotel was not anticipated. According to the minutes of the Keystone Hotel Company, the profits from the summer season of 1876 at the Bryn Mawr Hotel reached over \$38,000, which was more than enough to cover the expenditure of \$25,000 for the new wing.<sup>25</sup> Such speculations by Mr. Ruth of the beneficial effect of the Centennial on the Bryn Mawr Hotel and its summer season apparently proved to be correct.

In addition to purchasing furniture for the hotel prior to the summer season in 1876, physical improvements were made to the property and the mechanical systems of the building, probably as a result of the success of the



previous season and in anticipation of continued success. Proposed by the directors of the Keystone Hotel Company in August of 1876,<sup>26</sup> these improvements were completed during the winter of 1876-1877<sup>27</sup> after the close of the hotel for the season. They included the installation of an elevator<sup>28</sup> and also the upgrading of the plumbing and sewage systems by building "two wells below the intersection of the two drain pipes below the sink and others in the hollow and near [the] stable," and by running pipe through adjacent properties to the hotel.<sup>29</sup>

It was probably due to the success of the summer season that the directors of the Keystone Company resolved to keep the hotel open during the winter of 1876-77, "as may be necessary to accommodate the patrons of the house."<sup>30</sup> The superintendent of the hotel, P. S. Attick, who had been employed by the Keystone Hotel Company as superintendent as of October 1, 1875 for the salary of \$150 per month,<sup>31</sup> was instructed to post notices throughout the house informing the guests of the extended season at the hotel. Reservations for rooms during the winter months must not have been forthcoming, for it was proposed in advance that the hotel close its doors for the summer season as of November 30, 1876.<sup>32</sup> The aforementioned renovations and improvements were performed during the ensuing winter months.

The directors of the Keystone Hotel Company again



suggested keeping the hotel open during the entire year in 1880.<sup>33</sup> Attick was again instructed to notify the public of the availability of boarding at the hotel during the winter months as well as the summer season. At the end of the summer season, however, the president of the company decided not to keep the hotel open because of the exorbitant operating costs which winterizing the hotel would incur. According to him it would have cost \$1,500 a month to operate the building during the winter, and thus far no one had made application to stay there. As a result, it was proposed that the hotel be closed for the season on December 1, 1880.<sup>34</sup> It was decided at the same time to keep the boarding rates for the fall season the same as those of the summer season, although the superintendent was given the power to change the rates as necessary.<sup>35</sup>

The repeated efforts of the Keystone Hotel Company to keep the hotel open year-round and the lack of winter reservations resulting in the closing of the hotel after both summer seasons illustrates the lack of need for such a resort facility in the wintertime. This gives testimony to the theory of the Bryn Mawr area as being primarily a summer resort and the preference of Philadelphians to spend the winter months in the city instead.





## Iconography of Hotel Building and Grounds

The iconographic record of the first Bryn Mawr Hotel consists of several photographs taken at different times, several engravings and a sketch of the hotel and its grounds. One photograph dates from the early years of the hotel, circa 1871-1873, before either of the two wings, the tower or the roof-top balustrade were appended (Fig. 8). A later photograph exists which was taken sometime after 1875, as evidenced by the appearance of both of the wings, the tower and the rooftop balustrade (Fig. 10). An article in the Philadelphia Inquirer describing the destruction of the hotel by fire in October of 1887 stated that, "the hotel had been photographed only a few days before."<sup>36</sup> Therefore, it is quite possible that this particular photograph was taken as late as 1887, immediately before the destruction of the building. The mature foliage in this photograph lends additional evidence for the later date of the photograph.

An engraving has been found which depicts the hotel and its grounds before its circa 1875 additions (see descriptions of the additions below.) This illustration of the busy resort hotel depicts fledgling trees, winding and unpaved drives and a number of riders and strollers enjoying the hotel grounds (Fig. 9).

Another interesting depiction of the hotel is an engraving by artist Fred B. Schell which was published



in Summer Excursion Routes in 1884 (Fig. 11).<sup>37</sup> This detailed engraving was presumably produced for the Passenger Department of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and illustrates the hotel after the additions were made circa 1875. Another depiction of the hotel exists in the form of a sketch used to accompany an article about the hotel fire in the Philadelphia Inquirer. This sketch is very similar to the circa 1875 photograph because of the viewpoint of the hotel building and its surrounding grounds.<sup>38</sup>

### **The Design and Structure of the First Bryn Mawr Hotel**

From close examination and comparison of the various depictions of the hotel building and its grounds, the architectural design as well as individual architectural elements are evident on the structure (Figs. 8,9,10 and 11.) The differences in the depictions of the two photographs is evidence of the significant structural and cosmetic modifications which the hotel underwent to attract and accommodate its guests. Many of the architectural features on the building were typical of post-bellum architecture and are evidence of the effort expended by the owners and designers to create a fashionably attractive building. Constructed of a "beautiful gray stone,"<sup>39</sup> both the main portion of the Bryn Mawr Hotel and the two additional wings were



described as having a design which was "artistic [with] the finish elegant." Having a footprint in the shape of a cruciform (Fig. 12), the hotel building, including the two wings, contained 350 rooms in which 500 guests "could be accommodated with comfort and even luxury."<sup>40</sup>

One dominant element of the Bryn Mawr hotel was the mansard roof, an omnipresent roofing style commonly installed on both newly constructed and renovated buildings in the 1860's and 1870's. Such roofs appeared on both small and large buildings and on residential, institutional and governmental structures as well. Not unique to the Philadelphia area, the mansard roof was used on buildings in regions throughout the country. The mansard of this particular building was punctuated with gabled, dormered windows, which were placed in vertical alignment with the windows of the floors below. An integral architectural feature of this mansard roof was the polychromy of the roof tiles themselves. Evident in the photograph is a pattern of two parallel, horizontal bands of roofing tile which are located in the center of the roof and which, along with the roof itself, wrap around each section of the hotel building. While the differentiation of color within the pattern of the roof tiles is evident in the photograph, it is not, however, marked in the engravings and sketch of the hotel building. Such polychromy was a characteristic roofing element which



was widely used in the 1870's on large institutional structures as well as on smaller, residential buildings. The use of the polychromed mansard roof on this resort hotel is documented evidence of the bow to fashion which was made in the design and construction of the hotel.

### **The Hotel Verandah**

Wrapping around the south, west and north facades of the hotel building was an expansive wooden verandah with a balustered railing. The floor of the verandah was supported by columns below and the projecting roof of the verandah by columns as well. Because of its appearance in depictions of the hotel that were recorded before the wings and wooden tower were added (Figs. 7 and 8), it is presumed that this verandah was an original feature of the structure. In examining and comparing the different depictions of the building, it is not known whether any modifications to the verandah were made during the renovations of 1873 and 1875.

The inclusion of the verandah into the design of the hotel building was another concession to current fashion. An expansive, encompassing, and sometimes multi-storied verandah was a typical architectural feature of American resort hotels constructed before and after the Civil War. Not to be outdone by other resort hotels located in the vicinity and elsewhere, the Bryn Mawr Hotel





displayed its own prominently broad verandah, as evidenced by the existing iconographic record.

The function of the verandah of the Bryn Mawr Hotel was no different from that of the verandahs of other resort hotels located in mountainous areas or in seaside locations. Possibly inspired by the design of the prototypical verandah of the Union Hotel in Saratoga, New York, built in the 1860's, the verandah of the Bryn Mawr Hotel served as an integral element of the building, hovering between the exterior and the interior spaces of the hotel building, making the experiences of both possible under one long, continuous roof. In effect, the verandah at the Bryn Mawr as well as elsewhere was at once part of the indoors and outdoors where guests could appreciate nature without having to be fully exposed to it. The verandah of a resort hotel was generally advertised as a major amenity and touted profusely. Such an amenity was almost a necessity to the attraction and success of the resort hotel.<sup>41</sup> The verandah at the Bryn Mawr Hotel undoubtedly played a major role in attracting visitors to this resort and was valued by the management and vacationers alike.

### **Modifications of the Hotel Building**

An architectural element which was added to the central section of the front of the main building of the



Bryn Mawr Hotel was a wooden tower (Fig. 10 and 11). Projecting from the facade of the building, this tower formed a covered balcony on the third floor, an enclosed porch on the fourth floor, and a steep, mansard-roofed square cupola which projected skyward from the main roof. This unit was probably constructed all at one time, as evidenced by the near continuation of the vertical, wooden structural members, which extended from the third floor balcony to the fourth floor enclosed porch. These vertical members were also repeated in the paired, vertical supports of the cupola. In addition, the columns and decorative bracketing of the third floor balcony were echoed in the columns and bracketing of the cupola as well as in the half-timbering of the fourth floor enclosed porch. This tower addition may have contained a cistern within or near its structure for the supply of water to the upper floors of the hotel building.<sup>42</sup>

The addition of this tower was a departure from the architectural design of the building itself because it resembles what has been described as the "Stick Style" of architecture.<sup>43</sup> Contrary to the solid, enclosed masonry construction of the hotel building, the skeletal wood frame structure of the balcony, porch and cupola were fully exposed. Wooden structural elements such as the columns and bracketing became not only the structural members of the tower but the decorative elements as well.



An additional modification to the structure, as evidenced by a comparison of the earlier and later photograph, was the addition of the rooftop balustrade. Close inspection of the latter photograph reveals that the balustrade, probably of iron, encircled the roof of the main building as well as the two wings, while the roof of the rear portion of the main building is seemingly devoid of this decorative detail.

Modifications made to the original structure, in the form of the stylized tower addition and the rooftop balustrade, conformed to the current architectural and construction modes of the day. The financial means to keep abreast of current fashion by using such architectural idioms as the polychromed, mansard roof and the expansive verandah in the original construction as well as the idiom of the newer "Stick-Style" of the addition is evidence of the high expectations of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company for the ensuing popularity and success of the hotel facility as a fashionable resort hotel. In addition, the solid masonry construction of the hotel building suggests that no expense was spared by the railroad company in its construction.

### **Facilities and Amenities**

The hotel building was not the only structure of which the facilities of the resort hotel were comprised.



In addition to the hotel building, it is reported that a "commodious stable,"<sup>44</sup> a frame building housing the billiard table, an artesian well and a spring were among the support buildings and features located on the premises of the Bryn Mawr Hotel.<sup>45</sup> Recorded features of the interior spaces within the first floor of the hotel are a kitchen and one or more laundry rooms located in the northeast wing and a dining room which was connected to the kitchen by a passageway. This passageway served to join the dining room with the main, or original, building of the hotel.

Guest rooms consisting of suites and single rooms were located above these common rooms on the first floor and extended up to the fourth floor.<sup>46</sup> Another feature of the hotel was the presence of a pharmacy, which was reportedly opened in the hotel in the summer of 1887 by a pharmacist from Ardmore, although the proximal relationship of the shop to the rest of the rooms of the hotel is unknown.<sup>47</sup> The only information known about the interior finishes of the hotel is that there was woodwork in the rooms on the first floor of the northwest, or Centennial, wing.<sup>48</sup>

In Summer Excursion Routes, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company described the building as being "equipped with every convenience that can enhance the comfort and luxury of its guests."<sup>49</sup> Amenities of the hotel included





gas light, bathtubs, the first elevator on the Main Line, a billiard room, a "ten-pin alley"<sup>50</sup> and first quality mattresses. An additional luxury, for the era that is, was the presence of one bathroom on each floor of the hotel, or approximately one bathroom for every fifty people.<sup>51</sup>

The question of electrifying the hotel arose repeatedly, according to the minutes of the board meetings of the Keystone Hotel Company. The president of the Keystone Company suggested "Electric Light" for the hotel in 1881, but when a \$1610 estimate for such an installation was obtained, the directors abandoned the proposal.<sup>52</sup> The same modernization proposal arose again in 1886 but was rejected in 1887 because such an installation would be "unexpedient."<sup>53</sup>

### **Interior Furnishings**

According to newspaper accounts of the day, the hotel was outfitted with much "fine furniture."<sup>54</sup> Such furniture was reportedly valued at \$33,315.94 in 1876<sup>55</sup> and \$75,000 in 1887 upon the destruction of the hotel by fire.<sup>56</sup> The appraised value of the furniture at the Bryn Mawr Hotel in 1876 was higher than that of the furniture at the Keystone Company's other hotels, namely, Logan House in Altoona and the Union Depot Hotel in Pittsburgh. While the furniture at the Logan House was valued at \$30,560.30, the furniture at the Union Depot Hotel was



valued at only \$17,927.95. These figures, along with furniture valuations of the Jersey City and West Philadelphia restaurants, were "based upon the estimated value of the property at a forced sale and [were] very much below the actual cost of the same."<sup>57</sup>

Through the comparison of these figures it can be suggested that either the quality of the furniture at the Bryn Mawr Hotel, the quantity of it, or both exceeded that of the other hotels.

The furniture at the Bryn Mawr Hotel along with the furniture at the other facilities was the property of the Keystone Hotel Company. As part of the management of the hotels and restaurants which the company leased from the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, the Keystone Company in turn leased furniture to these facilities. While a listing of the furnishings leased to the Bryn Mawr Hotel has not been located, documentation of the rented furniture at the Logan House included mention of the standing furniture throughout the hotel, including chairs, tables, sideboards, screens, billiard table, urns and a fireproof safe in addition to the carpets, kitchen refrigerator and ventilating fans. Equipment which was leased by the Keystone Hotel Company to the Mountain House at Cresson Springs included equipment both in the hotel and on the grounds as well as furniture in the hotel and cottages such as the fireproof safe, urns, articles in the kitchen,



a billiard table, carpets and refrigerators. The equipment leased to the Union Depot Hotel included tables, chairs, steam connected articles and the range.<sup>58</sup>

The Union Depot Hotel in Pittsburgh was destroyed by fire on July of 1877. The building as well as most of the furnishings perished with the exception of silverware, linens, horses, wagons and other miscellaneous items. Immediately following this disaster, insurance policies of \$20,000 each were purchased for the furnishings at the Bryn Mawr Hotel and Logan House.<sup>59</sup>

### Continuing Improvements

Improvements to the Bryn Mawr Hotel and its grounds continued. In April of 1881 the sewage system at the hotel was improved<sup>60</sup> and the month of May brought renovations in the laundry and children's quarters upon a proposal by the directors to provide a separate children's apartment for the intake of meals with their nurses.<sup>61</sup> During that same spring a J. M. Robinson of Elmira, New York, manufactured 150 bedroom suites for \$8,000.<sup>62</sup> Whether these suites were manufactured entirely for the use of the Bryn Mawr Hotel alone or for all three of the hotels is unknown. The parlor and office of the hotel were recarpeted in the spring of 1886, with the removed carpets being re-installed in the bedrooms.<sup>63</sup> In the fall of 1886 the stable and ice house were repaired, and in the same



season plans were presented by the original architects, who by this date had become Wilson Brothers and Company, for the extensive alteration of the hotel facility. After quick perusal of the plans by the directors of the company, however, it was decided by the president of the Keystone Company to forgo any alterations to the building for the time being until the future of the hotel was determined.<sup>64</sup>

### **Landscaping of the Hotel Grounds**

Accounts of the landscaping immediately surrounding the hotel differ markedly. According to the memoirs of one observer, J. W. Townsend, the original landscaping was allegedly barren and unattractive. Two large "unsightly" ponds were maintained on the hotel grounds in front of the hotel. Fed by a small stream nearby, these ponds were formed for the supply of ice to the hotel in the summertime as no other source for ice existed in the vicinity. Dry weather merely converted these ponds to "mud ponds." In addition there were very few trees on the original hotel site, as well as in the entire Bryn Mawr tract, for that matter.<sup>65</sup> Starkly contrasting with Townsend's bleak-sounding description of the landscaping of the hotel site is the flowery description offered by the Passenger Department's Summer Excursion Routes of 1884:





The grounds are laid out in avenues and promenades, lawns and flower gardens. Forest trees supply a generous shade; flowers, shrubbery, and a lakelet add beauty to the landscape.<sup>66</sup>

Townsend has also stated that, in order to beautify the tract, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company eventually lined the streets of the tract and the hotel with young maple trees. Substantiating this statement is the presence of small trees on the grounds as seen in the early photograph of the hotel (Fig. 8). Whether such "flower gardens" and "forest trees" existed or not, the propagandistic description by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company was naturally intended to attract visitors to the Hotel and its environs and was a typical marketing device used by the railroad company.

Interestingly, an undated site plan of this first Bryn Mawr Hotel and its grounds (Fig. 12), which also shows the second hotel outlined in pencil over the footprint of the original structure, specifies the location and species of either proposed or existing trees on the grounds. These trees, as drawn and keyed on the plan, include cherry, chestnut, cedar, buttonwood, poplar, ash and gum trees.<sup>67</sup> The later photograph of the hotel and grounds does show mature trees lining the drive of the hotel. If these trees were indeed planted soon after the construction of the hotel, they would have had the chance



to mature by the date of publication of the excursion guidebook of 1884, lending some credibility to the grandiose claims of the Passenger Department of the railroad company.

### **Social Life and Activities at the Hotel**

The social life at the Bryn Mawr Hotel during the summer season was reportedly quite gay and drew the attendance of local residents as well as the overnite guests of the hotel. The summer season in Bryn Mawr was eagerly anticipated by the local townspeople, as one editorial comment stated in 1886,

Summer visitors are the life of a town, as has been fully demonstrated in Bryn Mawr in the past seasons, and if we would continue to enjoy this pleasing and agreeable state of affairs, we must endeavor to make our town as attractive as possible to induce further visits from the residents of the crowded cities.<sup>68</sup>

Besides heralding the approach of the summer season, the daily local paper regularly reported the arrival of guests to the resort hotel in addition to the specific activities of the hotel guests, as illustrated by the accounts given below.

Entertainment for both local residents and hotel guests was provided by a variety of spectatorial and participatory activities. Such activities included the



"Bryn Mawr Assemblies" which were 'the events of the season' and were attended by approximately 500 people.<sup>69</sup> Additional summer entertainment was provided by a magic lantern exhibition, a comic talk, a mock trial, and an Orpheus Club concert.<sup>70</sup> The summer of 1886 witnessed a "delightful hop" and a "German". Such affairs were attended by as many as 150 ladies and gentlemen, and in preparation for such affairs, it was reported that the "large parlor was tastefully decorated with plants and flowers."<sup>71</sup> In addition to these social affairs it was reported that "many other important meetings enjoyed the privileges afforded by the house and its grounds."<sup>72</sup>

The guests of the Bryn Mawr Hotel enjoyed outdoor entertainments as well. Two very popular activities were carriage riding and horseback riding (depicted in Fig. 8), which by the summer of 1886 was "considered to be the most fashionable as well as the most healthful of all outdoor activities."<sup>73</sup> So prevalent was equestrian activity at the resort hotel that Mr. Townsend observed the following occurrences:

In the afternoon nearly everyone drove or rode. Cavalcades of perhaps twenty-five [horseback] riders would go out together and explore the country roads for miles around. Women and girls used only side saddles; bifurcated riding would have been looked upon with horror.<sup>74</sup>

The outdoor activities and calamities of the hotel



guests such as these were of interest to the local townspeople and were often reported in The News. For example, such reports included the mention of "Miss Polly Warburton, Bryn Mawr Hotel, [who was] out every afternoon driving behind a handsome pair of bays"<sup>75</sup> or described by accounts such as the following:

Mr. and Mrs Austin, of Bryn Mawr Hotel, were out driving in a two-horse carriage on Tuesday. They were out to cross the P.R.R. bridge at Penn Street, when a train passed under the bridge. The horse scared at the engine, made a short turn and upset the carriage, demolishing it and throwing Mr. and Mrs. Austin to the ground. With the exception of a few scratches and bruises they escaped injury.<sup>76</sup>

In addition to taking drives to enjoy the "freshness of air and beauty of nature," guests also had favorite local destinations which they enjoyed visiting, which is evidenced by the following report:

One of the objective points of the guests of the Bryn Mawr Hotel who go driving is Joseph E. Gillingham's creamery at Villa Nova.<sup>77</sup>

Athletics on the grounds of the hotel included baseball, which was fast becoming a popular sport in America. Competition for guests at the Bryn Mawr was provided by guests of the nearby Devon Inn, as evidenced by this announcement in the The News of 1886:

There will be a series of three games of





baseball this fall 'betweenines' composed  
of guests from Bryn Mawr and Devon Inn.<sup>78</sup>

Tennis may have been played at the hotel for The News of the summer of 1886 observed that "the young man with a tennis racquet in a bag is as much a feature as ever on trains to Bryn Mawr."<sup>79</sup> Cricket was played in the vicinity of the hotel at the nearby Merion Cricket Club and may have been played on the grounds of the Bryn Mawr itself, as evidenced by a report in The News during the summer of 1886 which stated that "the cricketers from the West Indies stopped at the Bryn Mawr Hotel preparatory to their game at Ardmore."<sup>80</sup>

Card games were a regular activity at the hotel, and local residents as well as hotel guests participated in them. The participation of local residents in the activities of the hotel was not uncommon, illustrating the interaction which occurred between the hotel and its surrounding community. Illustrative of such interaction is a description given by Mr. Townsend of a Mr. J. Kennedy,

another hotel 'character'...who came over  
from his house every evening with his tin  
lantern, for a game of cards with his hotel  
cronies.<sup>81</sup>

While guests of the Bryn Mawr Hotel hailed primarily from Philadelphia, vacationers travelled from distant cities as well and were listed regularly in the society



columns of the local Bryn Mawr newspaper, The News. The appearance of the names of foreign visitors in the local newspapers is evidence of the interest which the townspeople had in such newcomers to the area. According to The News during the years of 1886 and 1887, visitors included people such as the "Violet girls...who came from the South;"<sup>82</sup> Colonel A. G. Heaton, an artist from Washington;<sup>83</sup> Mrs. T. C. Gaylord who, according to the The News, was "a famous belle of Louisville...who was being entertained by Mr. Weaver Loper at Bryn Mawr Hotel;"<sup>84</sup> Mrs. Alice Galord and Miss Bettie Sherley who was "an heiress of Cincinnati."<sup>85</sup> Prominent visitors from distant places included the Lord Mayor of London and the Japanese commissioners, all of whom reportedly visited the hotel during their visit to the Centennial in 1876. While some sojourners came directly from the city to the hotel at Bryn Mawr, others included the hotel in their summer-long tour of other resorts. Among such sojourners were "Rear Admiral Mullaney and wife... who returned from Newport ...to the Bryn Mawr Hotel."<sup>86</sup>

Many of the hotel guests stayed at the resort for extended visits, including "Mr. and Mrs. Dalton [who remained] at [the] Bryn Mawr Hotel the entire summer"<sup>87</sup> and Isaac Michener, who "registered at Bryn Mawr Hotel for the summer."<sup>88</sup> It was also reported that J. E. Jeffords and his family "remain[ed] the entire summer at the Bryn



Mawr Hotel,"<sup>89</sup> and George E. Ludwig reportedly stayed at the hotel while travelling to the city every morning "before breakfast."<sup>90</sup>

The Bryn Mawr Hotel apparently was a perennial favorite for longtime boarders who visited the hotel repeatedly, including Mr. and Mrs. William R. Abbey, who were "among the oldest guests of the Bryn Mawr Hotel and have been coming here almost from the start."<sup>91</sup> In addition, Colonel Heaton "for so many seasons was among the first to arrive and the last to leave the Bryn Mawr Hotel."<sup>92</sup> The vacation habits of these summer sojourners illustrates the popularity of the Bryn Mawr Hotel as a long-term summer resort for both Philadelphians and out-of-towners alike.

In addition to promotion of the Bryn Mawr region by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company through its guidebooks and promotional newspaper articles, the editors of the local Bryn Mawr newspaper, The News, often provided their own advertisements for the Bryn Mawr region:

If you would enjoy Nature's works as seen  
in all their magnificence and inhale as  
fresh and invigorating breezes as e'er  
blew across the bosom of Old Mother Earth,  
come to Bryn Mawr, ye denizens of the  
crowded and heated city, and spend the  
summer season among the verdure clad hills  
that surround us.<sup>93</sup>

Confidence of the success of the summer season in



Bryn Mawr, especially that of 1886, whether justified or not, is expressed by the editor of the newspaper by such statements as:

We feel confident that the Summer of [1886] will witness a large number of visitors<sup>94</sup> than any previous season for years.

Or the following:

The Bryn Mawr Hotel opened for the season on Monday. A very successful season is anticipated<sup>95</sup> by the general manager, Mr. P. S. Attick.

The publication for general readership of such optimistic comments about the summer season in Bryn Mawr and its resort hotel are evidence of the close association which the town of Bryn Mawr had with the resort. Quite evident also is the dependency which the Bryn Mawr area had on the attraction of summer visitors to the Bryn Mawr Hotel.

The optimism expressed by the editors of the local newspaper, however, was not shared by the directors of the Keystone Hotel Company, according to the proceedings of the board meetings during the years of 1886 and 1887. Doubts regarding the future of the hotel were repeatedly expressed by the directors, and a wait-and-see attitude was adopted regarding the maintenance and renovation of the hotel during this time when the hotel was experiencing a decline in popularity and hence profits.





Whether the editors of the newspaper were aware of the problems facing the hotel is unknown. The repeated comments of the editors in The News certainly belied any awareness of a decline in patronage of the resort hotel. On the other hand, perhaps such repetitive assertions made by the editors regarding the pastoral environment of the hotel, its popularity and its bustling summer season may present evidence to an underlying anxiety concerning the declining patronage of the hotel. Viewed from this angle, the repetitious boosting and extolments of the Bryn Mawr area by the editors of the newspaper would be quite understandable.

### **The Devon Inn**

The hesitation of the directors of the Keystone Hotel Company to proceed with renovations of the Bryn Mawr Hotel either was a direct result of the declining popularity of the resort facility or, conversely, the declining popularity of the hotel could have been due to the failure of the management to modernize the facilities. As previously mentioned, the actual status of the resort, as reflected by financial statements, contrasted markedly with reports of the hotel's success as published in the newspapers of the day. It must be remembered that the editors of the newspaper as well as the surrounding community all had a vested interest in the success of the



hotel.

The decline of the popularity of the Bryn Mawr Hotel may be attributed to specific causes. One cause, if not the major cause, for the decline in popularity of the Bryn Mawr Hotel was the competition provided by the Devon Inn, another country resort hotel which was located in the nearby area of Devon, Pennsylvania, which was also adjacent to the Main Line, though farther from Philadelphia. Constructed by the developers Coffin and Altemus in 1882, the Devon Inn was intended to be "similar in its appointments to the one at Bryn Mawr."<sup>96</sup> Like the first Bryn Mawr Hotel, the Devon Inn was constructed to acquaint prominent Philadelphians with summer and year-round residence in the area. The success of the Devon Inn apparently was immediate, for, just as with the Bryn Mawr Hotel, an addition was added to the original structure before the second season was even begun. The popularity of the new Devon Inn was reported in the Daily Local News of West Chester, Pennsylvania, which stated at the time that,

The heated term being now at its bulge, this popular interior resort is well filled with boarders, 11 of whom are Philadelphians, excepting two or three who hail from New York City. This inn is now under full sail, and nearly every room in it has an occupant.<sup>97</sup>

The Devon Inn as well as its replacement (the first being destroyed by fire during the summer of 1883)



evidently became extremely popular vacation destinations during the mid 1880's. From the completion of the second hotel building for the summer season of 1884 until approximately 1913 the Devon Inn continued to be a popular resort hotel where "the best and most fashionable people held sway."<sup>98</sup> The reconstructed Devon Inn has been described by the following passage:

[It attracted] a brilliant assemblage of prominent and fashionable people... and the perfect appointments and elegant furniture were the theme of general admiration.<sup>99</sup>

In addition, the Devon Inn was described as having "all the conveniences and comforts of the best hotels-including fifty rooms with private baths attached." [emphasis mine]<sup>100</sup>

The sudden competition provided by the introduction of the Devon Inn upon the landscape of the Main Line countryside undoubtedly affected the patronage, and hence, the profits of the Bryn Mawr Hotel. With a decrease in profits, the overall physical condition of the Bryn Mawr Hotel was exhibiting some signs of deterioration according to the minutes of the directors of the Keystone Hotel Company.<sup>101</sup> Among the many reports of the success of the Bryn Mawr Hotel in The News during the years of 1886 and 1887 were the occasional reports regarding the quietness at the Bryn Mawr Hotel:



Things are very dull in and around Bryn Mawr. Most of the familiar sojourners are away and an air of depression prevails. The end of August will doubtless fill the house again.<sup>102</sup>

At the Bryn Mawr Hotel, the past week has been a quiet one. It is now sort of between seasons, but in a week or two the usual summer lethargy will drop off and there will be plenty of amusements among the guests.<sup>103</sup>

The "quietness" reported here may have been due to the preference of the Devon Inn over the Bryn Mawr Hotel, although this certainly was not evident in the remaining reports published by the editors of the newspaper. The increasing popularity of a hotel located farther away from Philadelphia than the Bryn Mawr Hotel was a natural occurrence, as migration of city dwellers and expansion of the suburbs of the city forced the boundaries between the city and the country to move gradually westward toward the Devon area. The gradual movement of this delineation occurred partially as a result of the westward access provided by the Paoli Accommodation to these rural locations.

In essence, the earlier success and popularity which the Bryn Mawr Hotel enjoyed was a cause for its eventual downfall. The hotel facility was so successful in luring people to the area and acquainting them with the benefits of country living that the area eventually became





a suburb of the city and a more rural location yet further away was sought by sojourners of the Devon Inn. The means of transportation, the Paoli Accommodation of the Main Line railroad, so instrumental in bringing guests from the city out to the Bryn Mawr Hotel, was also instrumental in transporting them away from the hotel and out to the Devon Inn instead.

### **The Destruction of the Bryn Mawr Hotel**

Unfortunately, the Bryn Mawr Hotel shared the same fate as the Union Depot Hotel in Pittsburgh, another hotel owned by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and operated by the Keystone Hotel Company. The Bryn Mawr was destroyed by fire on October 11, 1887. According to detailed newspaper accounts in both the Philadelphia Inquirer and The News of Bryn Mawr, the fire at the hotel erupted before seven o'clock in the morning<sup>104</sup> and spread during seven hours throughout the entire hotel building "leaving nothing but the walls standing."<sup>105</sup> The origin of the fire was described thus:

The flue from the kitchen range was the only possible source of ignition, for the flame broke out in that portion of the attic, quite near the roof, and filled the entire loft before discovery.<sup>106</sup>

According to a report issued to the Keystone Hotel Company by Peter S. Attick, the superintendent of the hotel, the



fire broke out near the roof adjacent to the smokestack and was due to a defect in the construction of a ventilating flue in the stack.<sup>107</sup> Although the origin of the fire remains the same in the accounts of the fire as reported in the Philadelphia Inquirer, The News and by Attick, the account of the initial discovery of the fire differs. According to one source the fire was discovered simultaneously by a headwaiter who was working in the kitchen and by a guest who was residing on the fourth floor who "came quietly downstairs and told Chief Clerk Wenrick that smoke was drifting around the fourth floor near the kitchen flue."<sup>108</sup> Another newspaper source describes the origin in the following passage:

It was 6:50 A. M., when Charley Wenrick, clerk and manager pro tem., in the absence of Proprietor Peter S. Attick, sat down to oatmeal in the dining room and happened to look up at the roof. He saw smoke and flame and hurried to the attic. Opening the door he found the fire ready to break forth in all directions, and the little draught thus afforded to the break in the roof gave the fire uncontrollable power.<sup>109</sup>

A tremendous effort was undertaken to control the flames of the fire by the staff of the hotel as well as local residents. According to the Philadelphia Inquirer and The News a fire hose was connected to a 20,000 gallon water tank, and according to The News:

Through the stupidity of one of the servants, the wrong stop-cock was turned



on in the kitchen which emptied the tank, causing the water to run into the waste pipes.<sup>110</sup>

The News then continued to describe the effort thus:

When the hose was found useless a bucket brigade was started, and pitchers, basins and cans were used in carrying water to the burning wing. After a hard hours fight the servants gave up trying to stop the progress of the flames and turned their attention to the guests and to the security of their property.<sup>111</sup>

Officials of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company were involved in the firefighting efforts when additional aid was sought via telegraph to the city. A railroad car from Engine Company Number Sixteen was sent from either Forty-ninth and Market Streets or Fifty-second and Market Streets with Fire Marshall Thompson, as well as an insurance inspector and five detectives from the Pennsylvania Railroad to "keep an eye on the furniture taken out."<sup>112</sup> The efforts by the firemen, however, were futile, for the "solitary stream of water which [they supplied] was ridiculously inadequate."<sup>113</sup> The immediate presence of the officials of the railroad company and the close guarding of the rescued furnishings of the hotel by its personnel is evidence of the proprietary control which the railroad company had on the hotel and its contents.

According to the newspaper sources, the fire reportedly consumed the laundries and kitchen first,



followed by the dining room in the right wing. The fire then supposedly retraced its path and spread over to the left, or the Centennial, wing. Once the fire was deemed to be beyond control, cooperative efforts by neighborhood residents, including students from Haverford College, resulted in the removal of all of the furnishings from the building and onto the lawn, which was described in the Philadelphia Inquirer:

One of the best pictures was the sight of so much fine furniture, amounting to \$75,000, taken out so quietly and placed here and there on the grass-carpeted hillside with scarcely a break or a jar. Everything was saved below the fourth floor-furniture, linen, carpets, silver, china and all, even the large mirrors-with hardly a scratch. At first there was some damage to articles that were being pitched out the windows from the fourth floor, but this was soon stopped.<sup>114</sup>

The careful removal of these items was so thorough that even the chandeliers were allegedly removed and carried outside.<sup>115</sup> Such a rescue effort shows the value which was placed upon the furnishings and contents of the hotel. Despite the catastrophe which obviously resulted, the scenario of the fire and the furniture rescue effort curiously was described as being one of "splendor" and "sublime" picturesqueness:

...To those who could resign themselves to a sight of terror when they are powerless to save, the spectacle of the great waves of flame and clouds of smoke ascending from





the magnificent structure, surrounded by generous lawns and the autumn foliage, reached a phase of the sublime. Perhaps the sight was prettiest about 10:30 o'clock, when sight-seers from far and near had gathered in carriages and stopped from the passing trains. The building was so large that there was ample time for spectators to gather before the climax of the fire was reached.<sup>116</sup>

## The Irony of the Fire

A number of circumstances and events leading up to the conflagration of the first Bryn Mawr Hotel in late 1887 suggests the possibility of arson. As previously mentioned, the resort hotel had started to exhibit signs of wear, deterioration and obsolescence (such as with the bathroom facilities and the absence of electricity) by the middle of the 1880's.

The directors of the Keystone Hotel Company had commissioned the architectural firm of Wilson Brothers and Company to submit to them architectural plans regarding extensive alterations to the hotel in November of 1886.<sup>117</sup> The fact that the president was opposed to the undertaking of any extensive alterations to the hotel suggests that the future of the hotel was in question at the time. It was during this same directors' meeting that the proposal to electrify the building was made for the second time and postponed by the president.<sup>118</sup>

In February of 1887 the directors of the Keystone Company resolved to perform only those repairs "as would



be necessary to put the house in condition to operate it the present season."<sup>119</sup> The unwillingness on the part of the directors of the Keystone Hotel Company to renovate the hotel for more than one additional summer season is conclusive evidence of the dim prospects which the directors saw for the future of the hotel. In April of 1887 it was motioned and resolved, however, that since the Pennsylvania Railroad Company had made some repairs and painted the hotel itself, that the Keystone Company should buy new carpets, modify the size of the dining room tables by cutting them in half and fix up the furniture in the hotel. The company spent \$1800 on new carpets and made the proposed repairs.<sup>120</sup> Such a discussion over who would perform the renovations shows an unwillingness on the part of either company to undertake such renovations itself, probably because of feelings of futility with which each organization viewed such renovations.

Additional evidence of the declining popularity of the Bryn Mawr Hotel can be seen in the profits of the hotel as reported by the 1885 and 1886 operating statements of the Keystone Hotel Company. By comparing the statements of both years, it is evident that there was a decrease in the net profit of the hotel from one year to the next. Whereas the net profits for the summer season between April and October of 1885 totalled \$10,884, the profits for the same period during 1886 totalled only



\$6,402, a \$4,482 decrease. After the stock in the hotel was deducted, the net profit for 1886 was further reduced to \$4,064.<sup>121</sup> This profit reduction must have caused concern among the directorate of the Keystone Hotel Company and undoubtedly led to the conservative decisions which were made during this time period.

The degenerating physical condition of the Bryn Mawr Hotel is revealed in a letter from J. R. Woods, the president of the Keystone Hotel Company, to the President of the Railroad Company which provided explanations for the operating statement of 1886. In this letter Woods stated to the president:

The decrease in profit at Bryn Mawr can only be accounted for by the deterioration in the house, and the unfavorable comparisons made between it and the new houses at Wissahickon and Devon. If this hotel is to remain in our hands a very considerable sum of money must be expended to make it habitable, attractive and profitable [emphasis mine].<sup>122</sup>

Not everyone shared the feelings of pessimism concerning the future of the hotel. In a hand-written letter sent to the railroad company during the summer of 1887, F. T. Wilson offered to rent the Bryn Mawr Hotel along with the restaurant at Broad Street Station for 10% of the gross receipts as the rental price. He also intimated his interest in renting from the railroad company the other restaurants as well, as illustrated in



his letter to the Keystone Hotel Company:

Bryn Mawr Hotel ought to be modernized to compete with the new hotels, Devon Inn and the Wissahickon. If the company would do this and enlarge it, and build eight to twelve cottages, I would be willing to pay 6% interest in the cost to do this.<sup>123</sup>

The receipt of this letter may have been the cause for a report in the Philadelphia Inquirer that the hotel had been up for sale for two months prior to the occurrence of the fire. It is noteworthy that less than three months after the receipt of this letter the hotel was destroyed by fire. According to the operating statement of 1887, which was prepared and presented by P. S. Attick to the directors of the Keystone Hotel Company on November 26, 1887, a month after the fire, the Insurance Fund of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company had paid the Keystone Hotel Company \$16,171. The furnishings that were salvaged from the fire and distributed among Logan House, Mountain House and the Harrisburg restaurant were estimated to be \$2,000 in value while the estimated value of the slightly damaged but auctioned items was estimated at \$62.00.<sup>124</sup> The recovered amount for the hotel building and its contents equalled slightly more than \$18,000.

The 1887 operating statement of the Bryn Mawr Hotel reported that the total value of the fire insurance





proceeds and the sale of the furnishings was valued at \$24,371. The remaining \$6,000 difference remains unaccounted for here. The statement also reported that the hotel was an asset to the company and was assessed at a value of \$24,500 before the occurrence of the fire. In summation, a final sentence in the report concerning the Bryn Mawr Hotel stated that "the value of the property as carried in the books had been fully realized"<sup>125</sup> - a most fortuitous outcome for all.

The admittedly deteriorating condition of the Bryn Mawr Hotel as stated by the directors of the Keystone Company in 1886 and 1887; the decreasing profits realized by the resort hotel; the increasing popularity of the Devon Inn; the destruction by fire of the Bryn Mawr Hotel in 1887; and the collection of insurance money by the Keystone Hotel Company from an insurance policy seems rather suspicious. The concurrence of all of these events suggests that the fire may not have been an accident but that it involved, if not an act of arson, some curious circumstances and coincidences.



## Notes to Chapter IV

1. Philadelphia Inquirer, October 12, 1887.
2. The News, October 14, 1887.
3. Ibid.
4. Roger W. Moss and Sandra Tatman, Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects 1790-1930 (Boston: G. K. Hall and Company, 1985), pp. 868-870. The son of William Hasell Wilson and grandson of Major John Wilson, Joseph Miller Wilson worked as an engineer and architect for the Pennsylvania Railroad Company from 1860 to 1876, during which time he was involved in a number of railroad projects. In 1876 he established a firm, Wilson Brothers and Company with his brother John Allston Wilson, who also gained experience with a number of railroad related projects. Because of the connections between the Wilson family and the railroad company, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company continued to patronize this architectural firm, which eventually included a third brother, Henry W. Wilson. After 1902 the firm was conducted under the name of Wilson, Harris and Richards and continued under the direction of Henry, the youngest brother.
5. "An Act to Incorporate the Keystone Hotel Company," April 20, 1866, Manuscript collection of the Records of the Keystone Hotel Company, Archives of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.
6. Original subscribers of stock, July 10, 1866, MS Records of the Keystone Hotel Company.
7. List of original directors, July 12, 1866, MS Records of the Keystone Hotel Company.
8. Index of board meeting minutes of the Keystone Hotel Company, MS Records of the Keystone Hotel Company.
9. The Cambria Ironworks was one of the largest rail mills used to manufacture railroad rails. Located in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, the Cambria Ironworks manufactured new and re-rolled rails for the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.
10. Voting list of Keystone Hotel Company, MS Records of the



Keystone Hotel Company.

11. "Statement of Receipts and Expenses of Bryn Mawr Hotel for 1872," MS Minutes of Keystone Hotel Company, 1866-1883, p. 19, MS Records of the Keystone Hotel Company.
12. Minutes, 1866-1883, July 10, 1876, p. 40.
13. Minutes, 1866-1883, September 11, 1878, p. 111.
14. Minutes, 1866-1883, March 19, 1880, p. 125.
15. Minutes, 1866-1883, October 9, 1876, p. 47.
16. Minutes, 1866-1883, January 1876, p. 25.
17. Minutes, 1866-1883, June 12, 1876, p. 37.
18. Minutes, 1866-1883, July 10, 1876, p. 40.
19. "Balance Sheet for 1876," Minutes, 1866-1883, p. 61.
20. Minutes, 1866-1883, June 12, 1876, p. 37.
21. Letter from J. R. Wood to George B. Roberts, September 28, 1888, Records of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Hagley Museum Archives, Wilmington, Delaware.
22. Philadelphia Inquirer, June 16, 1873.
23. David Ruth was the son-in-law of John D. McClellan, manager of the Logan House, which was another hotel owned by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. This relationship shows that even the management of the two hotels was interconnected.
24. The News of Bryn Mawr, October 14, 1887.
25. "Balance Sheet for 1876," Minutes, 1866-1883, p. 61.
26. Minutes, 1866-1883, August 28, 1876, p. 44.
27. Minutes, 1866-1883, October 9, 1876. p. 55.
28. Ibid., p. 51.
29. Minutes, 1866-1883, August 28, 1876, p. 44.
30. Minutes, 1866-1883, July 10, 1876, p. 39.
31. Minutes, 1866-1883, 1875, p. 23.
32. Minutes, 1866-1883, October 9, 1876, p. 51.



33. Minutes, 1866-1883, March 19, 1880, p. 125.
34. Minutes, 1866-1883, September 21, 1880, p. 130.
35. Ibid., p. 131. No specific boarding rates for lodging at the Bryn Mawr Hotel have been located.
36. Philadelphia Inquirer, October 12, 1887.
37. Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Summer Excursion Routes (Philadelphia: Allen, Lane and Scott, 1884), p. 35.
38. Philadelphia Inquirer, October 12, 1887.
39. The News of Bryn Mawr, October 14, 1887. This stone was probably the schist quarried from the bedrock that was located in the immediate area.
40. Philadelphia Inquirer, October 12, 1887.
41. Alf Evers et al., Resorts of the Catskills (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc. 1977), pp. 17-19.
42. According to Jeff Cohen, architectural historian, it was not unusual for a building of this height to have cisterns located on the roof. In addition, Barbara Alyce Farrow in History of Bryn Mawr has mentioned the existence of a "rooftop water tank" on the Bryn Mawr Hotel on page 41.
43. Vincent Scully in American Architecture and Urbanism (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1969), p. 91, discusses the "Stick Style" mode of architecture in detail as well as other modes such as the "Shingle Style." The appended tower element here is, in fact, reminiscent of certain elements of the exemplary Griswold House pictured on page 90 in Scully because of the appearance on both buildings of both the open stick-work of the porch bracketing and the filled in half-timbering of stucco and wood.
44. Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Summer Excursion Routes, p 34.
45. Philadelphia Inquirer, October 12, 1887.
46. Barbara Alyce Farrow, History of Bryn Mawr (Norristown: Hartenstein Printing House, 1962), p. 41.
47. The News of Bryn Mawr, June 3, 1887. The pharmacist was a Mr. S. F. Stadelman who also owned a pharmacy in Ardmore.





48. The News of Bryn Mawr, October 14, 1887.
49. Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Summer Excursion Routes, p. 34.
50. Minutes, 1866-1883, March 19, 1880, p. 125.
51. J. W. Townsend, The Old "Main Line", n.p., 1922, p. 57.
52. Minutes, 1866-1883, May 9, 1881, p. 138.
53. Minutes, 1866-1883, November 26, 1886, p. 80.
54. Philadelphia Inquirer, October 12, 1887.
55. Minutes, 1866-1883, June 12, 1876, p. 38.
56. Philadelphia Inquirer, October 12, 1887.
57. Minutes, 1866-1883, June 12, 1876, p. 38.
58. Letter from J. R. Wood to George B. Roberts, September 28, 1888. Records of Pennsylvania Railroad Company. Hagley Museum Archives, Wilmington, Delaware.
59. Minutes, 1866-1883, July 22, 1877, p. 75.
60. Minutes, 1866-1883, April 11, 1881, p. 136.
61. Minutes, 1866-1883, May 9, 1881, p. 138.
62. Minutes, 1866-1883, April 11, 1881, p. 136.
63. Minutes, 1883-1910, April 30, 1886, p. 73.
64. Minutes, 1883-1910, November 26, 1886, p. 82.
65. Townsend, p. 57.
66. Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Summer Excursion Routes, p. 34.
67. "Hotel Property" site plan, no date. The Baldwin School Archives, The Baldwin School, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.
68. The News of Bryn Mawr, July 9, 1886.
69. Philadelphia Inquirer, October 12, 1887.
70. Townsend, p. 59.



71. The News of Bryn Mawr, June 25, 1886.
72. Philadelphia Inquirer, October 12, 1887.
73. The News of Bryn Mawr, October, 15, 1886.
74. Townsend, p. 59.
75. The News of Bryn Mawr, August 5, 1887.
76. The News of Bryn Mawr, August 19, 1887.
77. The News of Bryn Mawr, August 5, 1887. It is interesting to note another mention of an ice cream manufactory located near Radnor in William Sipes' Pennsylvania Railroad (Philadelphia: Allen, Lane and Scott, 1875), p. 81.
78. The News of Bryn Mawr, September 3, 1886.
79. Ibid.
80. Ibid.
81. This J. Kennedy is presumed to be the same person who was an original stockholder of both the Keystone Hotel Company and the later Bryn Mawr Hotel Company. He was, in fact, the only man to participate in the incorporation of both companies. He was also a stockholder of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.
82. The News of Bryn Mawr, August 5, 1887.
83. Ibid.
84. The News of Bryn Mawr, September 9, 1887.
85. Ibid.
86. The News of Bryn Mawr, August 26, 1887.
87. The News, of Bryn Mawr, August 5, 1887.
88. The News of Bryn Mawr, July 7, 1886
89. The News of Bryn Mawr, August 5, 1887.
90. Ibid.
91. Ibid.
92. The News of Bryn Mawr, June 22, 1887.



93. "Invitation to Summer Visitors," The News of Bryn Mawr, July 2, 1886.
94. The News of Bryn Mawr, July 9, 1886.
95. The News of Bryn Mawr, June 4, 1886.
96. Robert Goshorn, "The Devon Inn," Tredyffrin Easttown History Club Quarterly, Vol. 22, No. 4 (October, 1984), p. 125.
97. Daily Local News, in Goshorn, p. 134.
98. Goshorn, p. 131.
99. Daily Local News, in Goshorn, p. 134.
100. Julius Sasche, in Goshorn, pp. 131-132.
101. Minutes, 1883-1910, 1886-1887, pp. 73-95.
102. The News of Bryn Mawr, September 3, 1887.
103. The News of Bryn Mawr, August 26, 1887.
104. Philadelphia Inquirer, October 12, 1887 and The News of Bryn Mawr, October 14, 1887.
105. The News of Bryn Mawr, October 14, 1887.
106. Philadelphia Inquirer, October 12, 1887.
107. Minutes, 1883-1910, November 26, 1887, p. 111.
108. The News of Bryn Mawr, October 14, 1887.
109. Philadelphia Inquirer, October 12, 1887.
110. The News of Bryn Mawr, October 14, 1887.
111. Ibid.
112. Philadelphia Inquirer, October 12, 1887.
113. Ibid.
114. Philadelphia Inquirer, October 12, 1887.
115. Ibid.
116. Ibid.



117. These plans have not been located. The site plan (Fig. 12) is believed to be of an earlier date.

118. Minutes, 1883-1910, November 26, 1887.

119. Minutes, 1883-1910, February 14, 1887, p. 85.

120. Minutes, 1883-1910, April 7, 1887, p. 95.

121. "Restaurant/Hotels Receipts and Expenses," Records of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Hagley Museum Archives, Wilmington, Delaware.

122. Letter from Wood to Roberts. Explanation of the operating statement, 1887. Records of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.

123. Letter from F. T. Wilson, August 6, 1887. Records of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.

124. "Operating Statement of 1887," Minutes of the Keystone Hotel Company, 1883-1910, p. 119.

125. Ibid.





### The Second Bryn Mawr Hotel

I know they loved that hotel. They were very much impressed with it. And for a family to go year after year to the same hotel is a pretty good sign. They wouldn't want to do it otherwise.<sup>1</sup>

Fortunately, the destruction of the first Bryn Mawr Hotel building in 1887 did not signal the demise of Bryn Mawr as a summer resort locale. Although plans to rebuild the hotel were made as early as 1887 following the fire,<sup>2</sup> the new hotel did not appear on the landscape until 1891, when a second Bryn Mawr Hotel was erected in its place (Fig. 13). This second hotel was situated in nearly the same location on the site as the first structure although its position was slightly shifted.

The ownership of the 25-acre tract of land on which the Bryn Mawr Hotel was located changed hands twice before the second Bryn Mawr Hotel was constructed. On June 11, 1888, William Hasell Wilson and his wife, to whom the interest of the 14 lots comprising the hotel grounds actually still belonged, conveyed the land to the Manor Real Estate and Trust Company for \$146,000.<sup>3</sup> This company apparently was a subsidiary of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company as evidenced by verbage in the text of the deed conveying the land from Wilson to the Manor Real



Estate and Trust Company, which described the lots as "about to be conveyed to the Pennsylvania Railroad Company."<sup>3</sup> In this way the railroad company-operated property passed from the hands of a private middle-man, who served as the real estate agent of the railroad company, into the hands of a corporate subsidiary of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.

### **The Bryn Mawr Hotel Company**

On April 1, 1890 ownership interest to the 25 acre resort property again was conveyed, with the ownership transferring from the Manor Real Estate and Trust Company to a private corporation called the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company for the reduced amount of \$60,000.<sup>4</sup> Formed expressly for and prior to the purchase of the resort property, the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company was incorporated by a charter recorded and approved in January of 1890, which stated that the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company was formed precisely for "the purpose of the establishment and maintenance of an hotel."<sup>5</sup>

The specific intentions of the newly formed Bryn Mawr Hotel Company to construct and operate a resort hotel are evident not only in the wording of the company's charter but also in the deed conveying the property from the Manor Real Estate and Trust Company to the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company. In addition to stipulating that a first-class



hotel was to be erected on the property, the deed also prohibited the construction and operation of a number of establishments, all of a manufactory nature. In signing the deed the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company agreed to do the following:

erect and build on the said hereby granted land a substantial brick, stone or frame building to cost not less than \$150,000 to be used as a first class Hotel and ...that the land hereby granted shall be used ...for no purpose other than such as shall be necessary or proper to its use as grounds appurtenant to said Hotel...Provided however that it shall and may be lawful for the said the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company if they so desire to erect upon the land hereby granted cottages for the use of the guests of said Hotel.<sup>6</sup>

In the same deed, the company agreed not to

erect [at any time thereafter on any part of the land] any steam mill tannery, slaughter house, skin-dressing establishment, glue, soap, candle or starch manufactory, nor shall any building thereon erected be converted into a steam mill tannery, slaughter house, skin dressing establishment, glue, soap, candle or starch manufactory hereafter forever.

By including such wording both in the incorporating charter of the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company and in the deed of conveyance from the Manor Real Estate and Trust Company to the Hotel Company, the construction of a new resort hotel at Bryn Mawr was virtually insured.

The new corporation of the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company



initially issued \$300,000 worth of stock to twenty-four subscribers. The original amount of money actually raised for the incorporation of the company was \$30,000, or ten percent of the total amount of the capital stock. The original subscribers of the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company were local businessmen and industrialists, many of whom had vested interests in the existence of a successful resort hotel in the Bryn Mawr area. These shareholders the following men:

Joseph E. Gillingham  
Alexander J. Cassatt  
John E. Converse  
E. Y. Townsend  
Charles F. Berwind  
William Righter Fisher  
John M. Kennedy  
Addison Hutton  
Clement A. Griscom  
Wayne MacVeagh  
Edmund W. Smith  
Edward H. Williams  
William H. Barnes  
Henry C. Gibson  
A. Loudon Snowden  
W. E. Garrett  
George Philler  
George W. Childs  
George A. Heyl  
Joseph F. Sinnott  
William P. Henszey  
Isaac H. Clothier<sup>3</sup>

The nine original directors of the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company voted in by the stockholders included the following names:

Joseph E. Gillingham  
Wayne MacVeagh





E. Y. Townsend  
John E. Converse  
A. J. Cassatt  
Clement A. Griscom  
Edmund Smith  
Henry C. Gibson  
W. H. Barnes<sup>9</sup>

Interestingly enough, two of the original stockholders of the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company were also original stockholders of the Keystone Hotel Company, which was chartered twenty-four years earlier and which operated the first Bryn Mawr Hotel. Interestingly, it is possible that one of these subscribers, John M. Kennedy, was the aforementioned 'hotel character' who frequently visited the hotel from his nearby home to play cards with his "cronies" according to the personal memoirs of a local inhabitant."<sup>10</sup> According to the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company charter, the other stockholder common to both hotel companies was Robert F. Kennedy who, according to Philadelphia City Directories, may have been involved in the real estate business. The shares of stock purchased by the stockholders were not evenly distributed. The charter illustrates that while the majority of the stockholders held 100 shares of the capital stock, one shareholder held 110 shares, seven held 50 shares and two held only 20 shares.<sup>11</sup>

The reasons behind the investment of private money into the corporation of the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company and hence the land purchase and ensuing construction of a new



resort hotel is evident by examining the Philadelphia City Directories of the early 1890's. Although the majority of the original stockholders had their primary residences in the city, many of these men also owned established country seats in the Main Line area in the vicinity of Bryn Mawr.<sup>12</sup> Designed and constructed by notable Philadelphia architects of the day, these grand country estates included the Bryn Mawr home of Wayne MacVeagh, which was designed by Theophilus Parsons Chandler in 1882; the country seat of Henry C. Gibson, located in Wynnewood and designed by George Hewitt in 1881; and the Haverford homes of Clement Griscom and Alexander J. Cassatt, which were designed in 1881 and 1873 respectively by Frank Furness.<sup>13</sup>

With such valuable land holdings and impressive building improvements located in the Bryn Mawr area, it is easy to see why these men were interested in heightening the desirability and enhancing the attractiveness of the area by resurrecting the once-popular resort hotel at Bryn Mawr. Familiarity with the area, its resources, and its residents must surely have enabled these businessmen to recognize the existing market and the potential value of a high-class resort hotel located in the area.

The fact that the primary residences of the majority of the original shareholders were located in Philadelphia while their country homes were situated in the Township of Lower Merion if not directly in Bryn Mawr, illustrates



their own awareness of the ongoing attraction of the country to city dwellers and therefore the continuing market among Philadelphians for an up-to-date, luxurious resort hotel located beyond the confines of the city. By this date, however, the functions of the second Bryn Mawr Hotel differed slightly from those of the first Bryn Mawr Hotel. This new resort hotel functioned less as a "country resort," situated in rural surroundings, and more as a kind of "country club" for its visitors.

Ownership of the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company of 1890 differed markedly from that of the Keystone Hotel Company of 1866, reflecting the times and level of industrialization which existed during the incorporation of each company. The occupations and the industries with which the owners of the Bryn Mawr Hotel were affiliated differed from the occupations which were represented by the stockholders of the Keystone Hotel Company twenty-four years, or a generation, earlier. No longer owned and operated under the aegis of a railroad company as the Keystone Hotel Company was, the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company was a privately owned corporation. Some of the owners of the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company, however, were affiliated with the Pennsylvania Railroad Company in a directorate capacity.

Ironically enough, affiliation to the railroad company by the stockholders and directors of the Bryn Mawr



Hotel Company was stronger than with those of the Keystone Hotel Company, despite the fact that the Keystone Hotel Company's parent company was the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. Therefore, while the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company was an independent company, free from the ties of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, it, however, had its roots with and was an offshoot of the powerful transportation company.

A large number of the stockholders of the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company were involved in the transportation or related industries, such as the manufacture of raw materials for industrial purposes. According to the Philadelphia City Directories, the men involved in the transportation industry included Converse, Williams and Henszey, who were partners in the firm of Burnham, Parry, Williams and Company, a local locomotive building company.<sup>14</sup> In addition, Henszey was also listed as a proprietor of the Baldwin Locomotive Works.<sup>15</sup> Clement A. Griscom was a shipbuilder and President of the International Navigation Company, and Alexander J. Cassatt held different positions and eventually was a director of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.<sup>16</sup>

According to the Philadelphia City Directories, men involved in the manufacture of raw materials were John Gillingham, who was President of Gillingham, Garrison & Company; Edmund D. Smith was President of Edmund D. Smith





and Company, an iron manufacturer; and Charles F. Berwind was President of the Berwind-White Coal Mining Company.

Other stockholders of the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company who were involved in businesses or industries other than transportation or the manufacture of raw materials included Henry C. Gibson, who was listed in Philadelphia City Directories as an officer of the First National Bank as well as proprietor of the Henry C. Gibson Company, a real estate developing firm; George Philler, who was listed as the president of the First National Bank; Joseph F. Sinnott, of Moore and Sinnott Company, who operated a whiskey distillery;<sup>17</sup> George W. Childs, who was the owner of the Curtis Publishing Company and publisher of the Public Ledger; W. E. Garrett of W.E. Garrett and Sons, which was involved in the manufacture of snuff; Addison Hutton, who had a thriving architectural firm; Wayne MacVeagh, proprietor of his own law firm; William Righter Fisher who was a lawyer and also treasurer and trust officer of the West End Trust and Safe Deposit Company; William H. Barnes who practiced as a physician; and Isaac Clothier, one of the proprietors of Strawbridge and Clothier, merchants of dry goods.<sup>18</sup>

In addition to the indirect affiliation of the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company with the Pennsylvania Railroad Company through Alexander J. Cassatt, Edmund Smith later became the first Vice President of the railroad company, and



Wayne MacVeagh was to become the principle attorney for the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.<sup>19</sup>

The ratios of occupations and industry affiliations differed between the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company and the Keystone Hotel Company, further testifying to the increasing power of the city's industrialists. Whereas the owners of the Keystone Hotel Company of 1866 included three or more persons who were listed as dry goods merchants or grocers, the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company included among its owners only one merchant of dry goods, Isaac Clothier. In addition, where approximately four stockholders of the Keystone Hotel Company were listed as industrialists involved in the manufacture of raw materials, such as iron or coal, or associated with the transportation industry, such as railroading, the original subscribers of the later Bryn Mawr Hotel Company, included at least eight names of industrialists involved in either the raw material manufacturing industry or the transportation industry.

Such an increase in the involvement of industrialists and transportation specialists in the ownership of the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company of 1890 over the involvement of such men with the Keystone Hotel Company of the 1860's is illustrative of the increasing presence and influence in corporate structures which industrialists enjoyed in the latter half of the nineteenth century, especially those



connected with the booming railroad industry. The ratio of both sectors of businessmen in the ownership of each company is an accurate reflection of the drastic changes which occurred between the middle and the close of the nineteenth century as a result of the proliferating industrialization of Philadelphia. The comparison of the ownership of each hotel company illustrates the increasing importance and dominance which the industrialist gained toward the approach of the twentieth century and the indelible imprint which he imparted on not only Philadelphian, but American society as well.<sup>20</sup>

### **The Design and Construction of the Second Bryn Mawr Hotel**

The Bryn Mawr Hotel Company commissioned the Philadelphia architectural firm of Furness, Evans and Company to design their new resort hotel.<sup>21</sup> Interestingly enough, it was also Frank Furness and his partners who designed the country seats of George Roberts, the President of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company; Alexander J. Cassatt, one of the original stockholders and directors of both the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company and the Pennsylvania Railroad Company; Clement Griscom and William Henszey, other stockholders of the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company.

It should be noted that Frank Furness also designed in 1878 the Lower Merion home of Allen Evans, his future partner, and the Haverford home of Allen Evans' father,



Dr. E. C. Evans, in 1875.<sup>22</sup> That the directors of the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company commissioned the firm of Furness, Evans and Company is not surprising in light of the fact that a number of the original stockholders and directors of the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company were affiliated with the railroad company and that the Pennsylvania Railroad Company itself was one of Furness' most consistent clients throughout his entire career.<sup>23</sup>

Despite the apparent popularity of Frank Furness and his architecture among his influential clients, the design of the hotel has, at least by one observer, been oddly attributed to Allen Evans only, a local inhabitant and descendant of one of the original Welsh settlers of the area.<sup>24</sup> Currently, however, the hotel building, which now houses part of The Baldwin School, is primarily attributed to Frank Furness, which helps to illustrate a change which has occurred in the public's perception of him during the past sixty years and the increasing credit which he and his buildings have been receiving.<sup>25</sup>

The architecture of the Bryn Mawr Hotel was not unlike the architecture of many other American resort hotels of the era. Such hotel buildings, described as stage sets where vacationers could act out their fantasies,<sup>26</sup> were often designed in styles reminiscent of past eras and foreign places. Likewise the Bryn Mawr Hotel has been described as possibly being an interpretation of





the restored Chateau de Pierrefonds of the sixteenth century.<sup>27</sup> Robert A. M. Stern has called such chateaux adaptations, which were manifested in a number of American resort hotels besides the Bryn Mawr Hotel, a "modern dress version of life in Europe's royal courts."<sup>28</sup>

The architecture of the nineteenth century chateau of Furness, Evans and Company (Figs. 14 and 15) has been adequately described in the following passage:

The plan of the building is in an "l" form with a low two story structure...tacked on at the northern end. The main entrance is identified by a large semi-circular [structural element] protruding from the long "arm" of the "L" which, after several setbacks and various roof lines, is crowned by a conical roof form topped with a delicate finial. This semi-circular building element is surrounded by an open porch raised one story above grade which is reached by two wide stairways from the entrance driveway... Several other tower elements protrude from the arms of the "L", clearly indicating their function as stair towers by their [diagonally ascending fenestration pattern]. [Two facades] of the building facing south, and [two facades] facing west are surrounded at the first floor level by [wide], covered, wooden porches. A "porte cochere" entrance with accommodations for baggage handling is adjacent to the elevators just north[east] of the main entrance.<sup>29</sup>

In addition, the interior of the building consisted of

five stories...including a raised basement at grade level, a main floor one level above grade, and three floors of sleeping rooms (the top floor within the steeply pitched roof).<sup>30</sup>



The fantasy-like architecture of the Bryn Mawr Hotel conforms somewhat to the description of the American summer resort as offered by the nineteenth-century writer, William Dean Howells. According to him, the summer resort was

A strange world - a world of colonial and Queen Anne architecture, where conscious lines and insistent colours contributed to an effect of posing...never seen off the stage...<sup>31</sup>

Furness, Evans and Company provided its own description of the construction and physical features of the hotel building. Perhaps used by the firm as a promotional tool, this detailed description states that the hotel building was constructed of

granite, with brick arches and belt courses, the outer walls lined with brick, with a hollow space to exclude dampness. It is, with the exception of the roof timbers, fireproof throughout. The interior walls are of brick or hollow tile, or of studding with iron lathing, and the floors of iron and cement. An unbroken sheet of cement at each floor, reaching from wall to wall, completely deadens sound.

The roofs are covered with slate, and the cornices constructed of copper. There are three sets of iron stairs; those at each end of the building being in stone and brick towers. There are hydraulic elevators for passengers, baggage and kitchen supplies. The passenger elevator, starting from the basement, ascends to the fourth floor, so that guests, from their



carriages in the covered way, may step  
into it on the level.<sup>32</sup>

Of the interior of the hotel building, Furness, Evans and Company provided this additional description:

The kitchen and laundry, machinery and boiler rooms are in a detached building, thereby excluding all the objectionable noise and odor inseparable from these departments. Special attention has been given to the sanitary arrangements of the building, the plumbing being of the best and all fixtures of the latest and most approved character. A thorough ventilation is obtained by a special system of ducts and and steam coils. All bathrooms are floored with artificial stone, and lined with white glazed tiles. The drainage will be filtered and disposed of by the Waring System.<sup>33</sup>

Although the design of the Bryn Mawr Hotel differs markedly from that of Furness' urban structures, it bears a distinct resemblance to another large structure designed by the firm of Furness, Evans and Company. The Williamson Free School of Mechanical Trades, which was, and still is, located in Elwyn, Pennsylvania. Designed by Furness, Evans and Company in 1891, this sprawling structure is similar to the Bryn Mawr hotel in its use of material, coloration and design elements. Such elements combine, as they do on the Bryn Mawr Hotel, to form a building of relative calmness and restraint, contrary to the architectural firm's more exuberant and dramatic creations located in center city Philadelphia. The similarity in design of the



two institutional structures suggests a connection between the founder of the Williamson Free School of Mechanical Trades, Isaiah V. Williamson, and the owners of the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company or the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. Such a relationship remains, however, only a suggestion and has not been substantiated here.<sup>34</sup>

The design of the mechanical facilities of the Bryn Mawr Hotel building was thorough, with seemingly no expense spared by the owners in its construction. In describing their own project, Furness and Evans have stated the following:

Large iron tanks above the fourth floor, supplied by a powerful steam pump from an artesian well 200 feet deep, provide an ample water supply. The Hotel is heated throughout by steam, in addition to large open fire-places in all the main rooms and parlors and in a great number of the bedrooms. On the premises is a complete Electric Plant, which furnishes light throughout. There is also an Ice Plant in an adjoining building with a capacity of twenty tons a day, which also provides a system of refrigerating pipes for the cold storage rooms and refrigerators, keeping each at its required degree of temperature.<sup>35</sup>

Because the hotel was outfitted with an ice plant, an electric plant, artesian wells, a stable and a host of other facilities and amenities, it was said to be a completely self-sufficient facility.<sup>36</sup>





## Interior Spaces

In his discussion of the American hotel, Nikolaus Pevsner has quoted George Augustus Sala as saying that the:

American hotel is as roomy as Buckingham Palace...[and contains] ranges of drawing rooms, suites of private rooms, vast staircases and interminable layers of bedchambers.<sup>37</sup>

This statement rings true in examining the generous proportions of the interior spaces of the common rooms of the Bryn Mawr Hotel. The ample dimensions of the public spaces on the main floor of the hotel and their location in relation to each other is evident upon the examination of the plan of the main floor (Fig. 16). As shown on the floor plan, the public rooms of this floor were located to the right and left of the main hall.<sup>38</sup> Opening directly off of the right of the main hall was the Parlor, which measured a spacious 43'-0" by 52'-0". To the left of the main hall was a passage<sup>39</sup> off of which opened one of the stair towers, several parlors and a Card Room. At the end of this passage opened an expansive Winter Dining Room, measuring 43'-6" by 49'-8" and surrounded by generous windows overlooking the grounds on two adjacent sides. Adjacent to and flowing directly from the Winter Dining Room was the main Dining Room, which measured an even larger 43'-6" by 63'-0" and was lined with windows on two opposing sides of the room. At one end of this dining room



was a Children's Dining Room, measuring 26'-0" by 37'-8".

Space on the main floor was devoted to private as well as public use. Beyond the parlor to the right of the main hall was a passage from which opened on both sides a parlor as well as three bedrooms. These bedrooms ranged in size from 8'-3" by 16'-6" to approximately 14'-0" by 16'-6". At the far end of this passage was an entrance onto the porch, or verandah,<sup>40</sup> which wrapped around the end of this "arm" of the building and continued on both sides of it. Additional access to the porch was gained from the main Dining Room. The Winter Dining Room was probably thus named because of a lack of access to any portion of the exterior porch, thus rendering it more suitable for use during colder weather when egress onto the porch was unnecessary.

The floor plans of the second and third floors of the hotel building were almost identical to each other (Figs. 17 and 18). On both of these floors a public space was located directly opposite the main central stair forming what has been called

an important circulation nodal point  
where each [horizontal] corridor and the  
main vertical circulation of the building  
meet.<sup>41</sup>

This public area on both floors was comprised of a hall leading to a parlor which filled the interior space of the



semi-circular tower. The remainder of the two arms of the L-shaped building were lined with single bedrooms and suites of bedrooms on both the second and third floors. On the second floor there was one suite with four adjoining bedrooms; three suites containing three adjoining bedrooms; ten suites containing two adjoining bedrooms; and five single bedrooms. The bedrooms ranged in size from 9'-7" by 17'-0" to 16'-5" by 17'-0". Windows in the rooms on these floors were exposed to the roof of the porch below.

In many of the multiple-room suites on the second and third floors, "toilet-rooms" were located between each bedroom. In addition to guest rooms lining both sides of the long corridors, two single guest rooms were tucked into each side of the central hall which led to the semi-circular Parlor. Because of the presence of a large number of multiple-room suites on the second and third floors, it can be assumed that the majority of guests at the Bryn Mawr Hotel were families, ranging from small to large in size. The single suites presumably were used to accommodate single gentlemen.

The floor plan of the fourth floor differed from the plans of the second and third in that the bedrooms were less generously proportioned, with the sizes ranging from 8'-0" by 18'-0" to 11'-0" by 18'-0" and only a handful of rooms reaching the larger size of 14'-0" by 17'-0" (Fig.



19). Suites which were comprised of two and three bedrooms were prevalent on this floor although none included any toilet rooms within their confines as did the suites on the second and third floors. One "Bath Room" and three "Toilet Rooms" were scattered throughout this floor, to be shared by a number of guests. A distinctive feature of this floor was the usage of the interior space of the semi-circular tower. Instead of housing a public parlor as it did on the lower two floors, the tower contained three oddly, albeit interestingly, shaped bedrooms. These rooms contained radius walls,<sup>42</sup> and their windows were exposed to the flaring roof of the second and third floors below.

Located in the narrowing upper reaches of the conical roof, the fifth floor consisted of, again, three radius-walled bedrooms in the tower and four single bedrooms in the space that was occupied by the grand stairway on the lower floors (Fig. 19). Accessed by a single flight of stairs, the fourth and fifth floors, with their smaller quarters, decreased capacity for fire egress, and lack of attached toilet rooms, were undoubtedly the least desirable of the five floors.<sup>43</sup>

A noteworthy feature of the Bryn Mawr Hotel building was its exposed steel central stairway, which provided the primary access from the main floor to the upper floors. No effort was made by the architects to enclose or hide the structure of the stairway along with its accompanying





fastening devices. This undoubtedly was an attempt to display to the public the intentional fireproof characteristic of the structure as a result of concurrent public concern for the safety of hotel buildings. Such concern was a result of the conflagration and destruction of many mid-nineteenth century urban and country hotels, not least of these being the first Bryn Mawr Hotel.

Special preventive measures within the design of the second hotel structure undoubtedly were requested by the owners of the Bryn Mawr Hotel and integrated within the design of the hotel by Furness, Evans and Company in order to prevent the same fate as its predecessor. The particular emphasis of the fireproof characteristic of the Bryn Mawr Hotel is illustrated by a 1911 brochure of the Bryn Mawr Hotel which boldly announced on its front cover that the hotel is completely fireproof. The owners' attempt to alleviate the public's fears concerning the safety of this newest resort is obvious by such prominent advertising.

### **The Hotel Verandah**

As with the first hotel building, the second Bryn Mawr Hotel building included a verandah, or porch, as one of its major architectural features. The porch of the 1891 structure wrapped completely around one arm of the building and lined the inside of the other arm (Fig. 16).



The function of this porch was the same as that of the first hotel, mediating between the inside of the building and the out-of-doors, linking the social activity of the resort hotel with its natural setting.<sup>44</sup> Using the stage as a repeated metaphor for the resort hotel, the porch of the Bryn Mawr Hotel, as with the verandahs of other resort hotel buildings, served as the proscenium of the stage of the resort.<sup>45</sup>

As a testimony to the integral function and the social importance which the porch played in the life at the hotel, one informant has said in an oral interview, "Everyone was sitting on the porch in their rocking chairs...[and would sit there especially] after meals."<sup>46</sup> The importance which the verandah played in the social scenario of a smaller but similar resort hotel located in nearby Wayne, Pennsylvania, is evident in the recollection of another informant, who recalled Saturday night dances at the Bellevue Hotel. According to one young lady, these weekly dances were the highlight of the week for the summertime guests at the hotel, and the purpose of the porch "was to make friends [at the dances] and sit on the porch and so forth."<sup>47</sup>

According to the remaining iconography of the porch at Bryn Mawr, its furnishings included area rugs, chairs with arms, tables, large potted palm trees and wooden rockers (Fig. 20), all of which were said to have been



exactly alike and painted dark green to match the shutters of the windows. The deck of the porch was reportedly painted gray, while the railings and balusters were painted various shades of brown.<sup>48</sup> From the spacious porches of the Bryn Mawr Hotel guests able to participate in the spectacles of tennis and croquet, for which the hotel was reportedly popular, without having to become physically involved in the games themselves. As a visitor has stated, "of course the croquet grounds [were] right there, so you all got on the porch to see what was going on in croquet."<sup>49</sup>

### **Interior Furnishings**

The interior furnishings of the rooms were reportedly "Victorian" (Figs. 21 and 22) and all of the rooms were

decorated pretty much alike. They were always very comfortable and bright...They had chintzes and things like that... They [the management] were very anxious always to make everything comfortable.<sup>50</sup>

In describing the future interior decor of the hotel the architectural firm of Furness, Evans and Company asserted the following:

The house will be furnished throughout in the most complete manner, with every convenience for the comfort and luxury of the guests.<sup>51</sup>



## Theory of the Design of the Bryn Mawr Hotel

The design of the Bryn Mawr Hotel building has been theorized about on several levels. Three main theories have been provided, explaining the qualities of calmness and picturesqueness which is perceived in the architecture of the hotel building. The first theory emphasizes the building's function as a restful retreat, the second focuses on the connection between the hotel and the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and the third theory emphasizes the symbolic use of the building as a space for feminine energy.<sup>52</sup>

Since the building was advertised as a resort, located away from the world of banking and business, it was therefore a retreat from Furness' intense architecture located in the city. The idyllic design of the exterior was meant to evoke feelings of repose, escape and enjoyment. The second theory, that the calm restraint of the architecture of the hotel was influenced by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, seems to have validity because of the strong ties, as presented in this study, which existed between the owners of the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company and the powerful railroad company. It is quite plausible that Furness did not want to antagonize his patrons from the railroad company, since it was one of his most consistent clients throughout his career.<sup>60</sup>

The third theory of the design of the hotel





structure is quite conjectural and subjective and may have some validity. This theory maintains that the feminine function of the hotel may have imparted calmness to the design of the country resort hotel in comparison to Furness' more exuberant structures in Philadelphia. Whereas Furness' urban structures contained masculinely aggressive, "piston-like" columns and "grotesque, face-like features,"<sup>54</sup> the Bryn Mawr Hotel allegedly possessed a tranquil, almost storybook picturesqueness. Such a dichotomy between the two architectural styles as represented by the civic, public banks of Philadelphia which were designed by Frank Furness and the pastoral, more private resort hotel in Bryn Mawr have been interpreted as an embodiment of the parallel dichotomy between the aggressive, public world of male business and the more domestic, private realm of women.<sup>55</sup>

Giving further credibility to the theory of the Bryn Mawr Hotel as a building designed with the female in mind is a list of names of the occupants of over 400 hotel rooms found in an undated Bryn Mawr Hotel Register in The Baldwin School Archives in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. While the names of some males and family names appear in the list of guests, many of the names listed in the register are the names of women, providing evidence that a majority of the hotel guests were, in fact, females. This register, however, may actually be a list of the female boarders of



Miss Baldwin's School, who resided in the hotel building during the winter months of the year. The origins of some of these hotel visitors, or students, included the cities of Wilmington, Delaware; Falls Church, Virginia; Charlemont, Massachusetts; and Amarillo, Texas. The residences of the majority of these guests, however, were local Main Line towns in the vicinity of Bryn Mawr. Additional attention to the aforementioned metaphor can be found in a comment concerning the roofline of the hotel building which likens the irregular roofline of the Bryn Mawr Hotel to a "stiff, brassiere-like form" (Fig. 13).<sup>56</sup>

In other sources the verandah of a resort hotel has been attributed to belonging to the realm of women as well.<sup>57</sup> This notion, which conjures up images of verandahs lined with rocking chairs filled with female gossipers and gigglers, both young and old, is historically incorrect. Among descriptions of verandahs and piazzas, Sidney George Fisher's diary entry during a sojourn at the Heath House at Schooley's Mountain in the summer of 1838 may serve as evidence concerning male and female use of the verandah:

At 2 we dine. Then cigars and talk on the piazza...then tea and conversation with the ladies and enjoyment of the cool breeze on the piazza till 10.<sup>58</sup>



The hotel verandah was enjoyed by both men and woman alike as together they took advantage of the benefits which it afforded. The porch at the Bryn Mawr Hotel undoubtedly served the same purposes for both male and female guests as the verandah at the Heath House.

### **Athletics and Social Activities**

Athletic activities at the second Bryn Mawr Hotel included tennis, golf and croquet. The popularity of tennis at this resort is evident by personal reminiscences by a hotel guest concerning the excellent clay tennis courts available at the Bryn Mawr Hotel (Fig. 23). According to her,

They had very nice courts there and that was one of the reasons why we [her family] went there....That's one of the reasons why he [her father] wanted to come out here, because they knew...they had those good tennis courts.<sup>59</sup>

According to a 1911 brochure of the Bryn Mawr Hotel, the "splendid new Clay Tennis Courts [were] constructed at great expense [and] are a valuable and attractive addition to the sports and pasttimes."<sup>60</sup>

In addition to tennis, croquet was another popular activity enjoyed by guests on the grounds of the hotel. According to the reminiscences of the same woman,

Croquet was very strong at the Bryn Mawr hotel. They had a very fine croquet court.



And it was pretty hard sometimes to get a chance to play. Everybody else was wanting to play.<sup>61</sup>

As mentioned above, golf was also available to the guests of the hotel but reportedly not as popular as tennis or croquet, according to the source mentioned above. Due to the limited availability of land, the course consisted of nine holes instead of the usual eighteen holes (Fig. 24). The 1911 brochure of the hotel proclaimed the convenience of the course, saying that

As the first tee is directly in front of the Hotel entrance, players can indulge in the sport without spending time (precious to the golfer) in journeying to some distant country club...The distances over the course are not great but there are enough natural hazards to make a game sufficiently interesting and sporty.<sup>62F</sup>

Indoor activities at the second Bryn Mawr Hotel included, again, various card games and parties. Apparently different evenings were devoted to the playing of certain card games, as illustrated in the following explanation, published in the Home News in 1895:

Thursday evenings are whist evenings at the Bryn Mawr Hotel and Mrs. Andrews and Mr. Work lead in the running score... and the play will close with a whist dinner.<sup>63</sup>

According to the Home News of Bryn Mawr, euchre was another card game popular during the time, for which "large progressive part[ies] [were] given by the guests of





the Bryn Mawr Hotel."<sup>64</sup>

In addition to card games, more lively activities at the hotel included balls and dances. Similar to today's practices, outside organizations rented the facilities of the hotel for fundraising affairs. An example of the kind of social affair held at the hotel is the Snow Ball, which was held at the Bryn Mawr Hotel in September of 1895 as a benefit for the Department of Archaeology and Paleontology at the University of Pennsylvania. Extensive preparations were made for this event, in which

all the ladies will appear in white, or as some call it, an ice carnival, because of the ingenious devices, such as prismatic effects of electric light seen through walls of ice to be introduced...it represents a Country Lane in Winter. The back porch as before is the part decorated with cedar trees covered with artificial snowflakes and tinsel, with electric light of different colors in each tree. In one corner of the porch is a miniature grotto of ice with a miniature fountain of water in it...<sup>65</sup> The porch is enclosed with canvas.

Another ball reportedly held at the Bryn Mawr Hotel was given by the Bryn Mawr Hospital. To accommodate guests of the affair, a "special train for Broad Street Station" was arranged which was to leave Bryn Mawr at 1:15 a.m."<sup>66</sup> In addition, the Philadelphia Exchange for Woman's Work held a "sale of art and fancy needlework at the Bryn Mawr in June of 1893."<sup>67</sup> To be sure, these events were not the



only balls and fundraisers held at the hotel. The Bryn Mawr Hotel was undoubtedly an attractive location for a variety of social events because of its spacious facilities and extensive grounds. Whether or not the hotel rented its facilities to outside groups as an extra profit-making device or simply to help make ends meet during the later years of the hotel's existence remains unknown. Today, the hosting of such outside events and fundraisers has become commonplace.

### **The Bryn Mawr Horse Show**

Equestrian activity continued at the Bryn Mawr Hotel in the form of the Bryn Mawr Horse Show, an annual event which was held on the hotel grounds (Fig. 25). Begun in 1896 and probably running until 1913 when the building ceased functioning as a resort hotel, the Bryn Mawr Horse Show attracted "horsey people"<sup>68</sup> along with horses from locations in the Philadelphia area to points as far south as Baltimore, Washington, D.C. and Richmond. The harness and hunting classes of horses reportedly drew the largest crowds, with "costly and handsome" trophies and cups going to the winners of the different events of the show.<sup>69</sup>

The Bryn Mawr Horse Show was not the sole horse show in the Philadelphia region however. The Wissahickon Horse Show, held at the Wissahickon Inn, and the Devon Horse Show, which was begun in 1896 and held at the Devon Inn,



also drew spectators from far and wide. The horse shows at Bryn Mawr and Devon were apparently visited by some of the same people, as evidenced by a comment made by an informant in an oral interview, "everybody who ever went to one went to the other, naturally."<sup>70</sup>

The Bryn Mawr Horse Show was successful in attracting the creme de la creme of society from both Philadelphia and elsewhere according to the Bryn Mawr News and the Philadelphia Press. The names listed as attendants of the horse show in the Philadelphia Press of 1908 included the names of some of the most prominent families of the Main Line area and also of nineteenth and turn-of-the-century Philadelphia as well. These people included:

Mrs. [Mary] Astor and daughter<sup>71</sup>  
Mrs. Henry Vaux  
Mrs. William Clothier  
Mrs. Emily Philler  
Mrs. Robert Strawbridge  
Miss Wayne  
The Townsends  
Alfred Devereaux  
George Widener  
Gardner Cassatt  
John Fell  
Mrs. Alexander Van Rensselaer<sup>72</sup>  
Mrs. Craig Biddle  
Mr. Thomas Ridgway<sup>73</sup>

Philadelphians were not the only people to make their appearances at the Bryn Mawr Horse Show. Sojourners of the New Jersey seashore resorts and members of New York and New England society visited the Bryn Mawr Horse Show as well, as reported by the New York Herald of September 1895



which stated that

Quite a large party is being formed among the cottagers at Elberon and Long Branch to go to Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, to attend the Horse Show there on September 13 and 14, and the Cricket matches between the Merion and the Cambridge [England] teams, which are to take place the latter part of September.<sup>74</sup>

Visitors from New York and New England included:

Mr. and Mrs. William D. Bishop of Bridgeport  
Mr. and Mrs. William P. Wadsworth of New York  
Mr. and Mrs. George W. Woods of Boston  
Mrs. Norman L. Munroe and daughters<sup>75</sup>

Sponsored by the Bryn Mawr Horse Show Association, the Bryn Mawr Horse Show was a major social event of the year, as evidenced by lavish photographs and commentaries of the show which were published in the Philadelphia Press during its progress. Of course, one of the primary objectives of the show was to see others and be seen in the most stylish and up-to-date clothing ensemble as possible, as evidenced by a statement made in the Philadelphia Press during the 1908 show:

Probably the most important part of the show, the gowns to be worn, is also absorbing the attention of the society women.<sup>76</sup>

Interestingly, the daily newspaper reports of the horse show in Bryn Mawr included detailed descriptions and





photographs not of the horses and their feats but of the costumes worn by various spectators of the show instead. Not surprisingly, the reports of the horse show of 1908 contained an entire page of photographs of various female guests in their dresses and hats.<sup>77</sup> The emphasis on fashion at the Bryn Mawr Horse Show is also evidenced by headlines such as the following: "Scene at opening at Bryn Mawr oval one of striking beauty. Elaborate gowns worn-- Prize winners gain applause."<sup>78</sup> It is difficult to figure out here just who was winning the prizes, the horses or the women!

Such commentary and emphasis in both Philadelphia and local newspapers of the fashions on display and the people present at the horse show is testimony of the strong presence and, in fact, predominance, of the certain socio-economic class of people who attended the affair at the Bryn Mawr Hotel. In addition, the horse show seemed to enjoy popularity among this class for an extended period of time which lasted over fifteen years. That the Bryn Mawr Horse Show remained popular for so long suggests the presence of rooted tradition inherent in the continued annual event as opposed to the event being a fashionable, but singular, incident.

It has not been possible to ascertain exactly the number of guests who stayed at the Bryn Mawr Hotel during the course of the horse show, however, it is highly likely



that many of them did stay at the hotel as well as taking their meals there. In programs for the horse show, full page advertisements for the Bryn Mawr Hotel are displayed, complete with information and a photograph of the hotel. Advertising such as this within the pages of the horse show undoubtedly attracted visitors to reserve rooms at the hotel itself.<sup>79</sup>

### **Dual functions of the Resort Hotel**

The second Bryn Mawr Hotel remained a hotel solely for only five years. The year 1896 brought the arrival of Miss Baldwin's School private preparatory school for girl's,<sup>80</sup> which occupied the hotel building and its grounds during the school year, while the hotel was in operation for the summer season only (Figs. 26 and 27). This added function was undoubtedly a result of the fulfillment of a stipulation as outlined in the 1890 deed from the Manor Real Estate Company to the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company. As stated, the function of the building was to remain that of a hotel and only a hotel for a specified amount of time:

And further that the land hereby granted shall be used during said period of five years for no purpose other than such as shall be necessary or proper to its use as grounds appurtenant to said hotel.<sup>81</sup>

It is apparent that the hotel company owners waited until



the termination of this agreement in 1896 to utilize the facilities and grounds in an additional way. Whether the added function became necessary because the hotel company was experiencing financial hardship or because there was a dearth of hotel visitors during the winter months is not unequivocally clear.

As a result of the termination of the deed restrictions, Miss Baldwin's School, which in 1919 would be incorporated as The Baldwin School, began in 1896 to lease the Bryn Mawr Hotel building and one third of the hotel grounds during the winter months for the purpose of conducting her school. Moving into the grand hotel building in the fall for the first time must have been a novel and exciting event for the young students of the Baldwin School, as Elsie Raser of the Class of 1897 wrote:

Those three years at school were such happy ones, but 1896-1897, the first year in the Hotel, was wonderful. How we all enjoyed its luxury and the beautiful grounds on which we played basketball and tennis and golf.<sup>82</sup>

### **The Demise of the Second Bryn Mawr Hotel**

The final step in the slow demise of the Bryn Mawr Hotel occurred in 1913 when The Baldwin School signed a new leasing agreement with the owner of the hotel, entitling it to usage of the building and its grounds on a full-time, year-round basis. By this date, however, the



hotel and its grounds were no longer owned by the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company, for on January 29, 1909, the hotel company sold its interests to the Bryn Mawr Real Estate and Trust Company.<sup>83</sup> The precise reasons for the sale by the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company remain unknown.

In all probability, the decline in the patronage of the Bryn Mawr Hotel was a result of several factors which were not uncommon phenomena, occurring in similar regions after the turn of the century. One of these factors was the decline in popularity of the Bryn Mawr area as a resort locale. While seashore resorts had been frequented for decades, they became increasingly popular as a result of improved transportation and the use of the automobile. In addition, as people became familiar with the Bryn Mawr area it gradually developed into a populous suburb, instead of a resort location, with an increasing number of residents choosing to live in the town on a year-round basis. As such, rural locations farther west along the Paoli Accommodation were sought as the weekend and summertime retreats for Philadelphia residents.

One of these locations lying farther out in the country was the Devon Inn as described above. Located in Devon, Pennsylvania, and accessed by the Paoli Accommodation of the Main Line Railroad, the Devon Inn attracted its own share of upper class visitors between the years of 1882 and 1913. As a popular resort hotel,





the firmly established Devon Inn undoubtedly provided keen competition for the newer Bryn Mawr Hotel, drawing patrons further westward, away from Bryn Mawr and on to Devon instead. Moreover, the successful utilization of the Bryn Mawr Hotel building as an educational facility served well to suggest other ways, and eventually a better way, in which the facility could be utilized economically by its owners.

### **The Baldwin School**

After beginning to occupy the hotel building and its grounds on a year-round basis in 1913, the preparatory school continued to flourish as its reputation of quality education increased. So successful was the educational facility that in 1918 a new five-year lease was signed between Miss Baldwin's School and the Bryn Mawr Real Estate and Trust Company, and in 1919 the school was incorporated by headmistress Elizabeth Forrest Johnson as The Baldwin School, a non-profit, educational corporation. Effective from June of 1918 to June of 1924, the new lease conveyed to the Baldwin School the usage

of the main hotel buildings and the grounds therewith enclosed known as the Bryn Mawr Hotel...with the exception thereof of such portions thereof as are devoted to the operation of light, heat, water, refrigeration and mechanical plants connected therewith, ...including the boiler, dynamo, tank and engine rooms....together with the ice plant



appurtenant thereto.<sup>84</sup>

In addition the school was also conveyed the following:

the use and enjoyment of all such articles of furniture now contained in...the said hotel building as it may require for the accommodation of the pupils in attendance upon said school, with the exception of the toilet sets, bed and table linen, blankets, glass, crockery, other table furniture, and ordinary kitchen utensils, all of which said excepted articles shall be removed by the lessor or stored by the lessor.<sup>85</sup>

The rental fee for the structure was \$27,000 per year for the years of 1919, 1920 and 1921 and increased to \$27,500 for the years of 1922 and 1923.<sup>86</sup> The yearly rent was to be paid in monthly installments, which equalled \$2,250 per month for the first three years and \$2,292 per month for the last two years of the lease. The entrance of The Baldwin School into such a long-term contract with the Bryn Mawr Real Estate and Trust Company attests to the economic success of the preparatory school and its successful integration into the already renowned educational climate of Bryn Mawr.

According to an announcement made by the directors of The Baldwin School to alumnae, students and parents in 1921, it is evident that the Bryn Mawr Real Estate and Trust Company decided against renewing its lease with The Baldwin School after the 1924 termination date. As a



result of this denial, the school located a nearby site for the school, within a mile of the Bryn Mawr train station and Bryn Mawr College. According to the directors of The Baldwin School, this proposed property would cost \$75,000, and the construction of "simple, beautiful buildings" would cost an additional \$675,000.<sup>87</sup> The reason why the Bryn Mawr Real Estate Company did not wish to renew the lease or sell the property to the school upon the termination of the five-year lease has not been ascertained.

As early as 1922, however, two years prior to the termination of the school's five-year lease, the corporation of The Baldwin School purchased the majority of the stock of the Bryn Mawr Real Estate and Trust Company, rendering The Baldwin School the new owner of the hotel building and the twenty-five acre grounds on which it stood. Again, ownership of the property must have been uneconomical, for, reportedly, the majority of the stockholders of the real estate company were, by this time, anxious to sell their shares of stock in order to unload the large real estate holding. The last shareholder held out however, finally saying, "I have said that I would not sell and I will not sell. Here is the stock which I will give the School."<sup>88</sup>

The acquired real estate interests included the twenty-five acres surrounding the hotel building, the



hotel building itself and the contents of the building. With the transferral of the property and buildings, the school assumed a \$25,000 mortgage.<sup>89</sup> In anticipation of the transferral of the real estate in the winter of 1922, the directors of The Baldwin School established a forty year sinking fund for the purpose of raising money for the erection of a new academic building adjacent to the older hotel building. Bonds sold for the fund were dated October 1, 1922 and were due on October 1, 1962; the bonds were available in denominations of \$500 and \$1000 each. A notice advertising the bonds stated that the twenty-five acres on which the building stood were valued at \$250,000, the improvements on the property appraised at \$500,000 and the contents of the building valued at \$100,000. As such, all of the improvements and their contents were insured for these amounts.<sup>90</sup> Upon the printing of the notice, construction of the new academic building, Elizabeth Forrest Johnson Schoolhouse, was underway and was completed in 1925. As of the date of the purchase of the property, The Baldwin School had occupied the Bryn Mawr Hotel for twenty six years and would continue to do so for the next sixty eight years and counting.

Until the construction of the new academic building, the school activities and residence facility were housed in the hotel building. After the Johnson Schoolhouse was constructed, however, the hotel building was used





primarily as a residence hall for boarding both students and faculty and came to be known by everyone at The Baldwin School, and still is, the "Residence."

Unfortunately, the building was not to remain a boarding facility, for The Baldwin School ceased its boarding operations in August of 1974, due to a steady but dramatic decrease in enrollment.<sup>91</sup> At this point the building underwent interior renovations to convert some of the former hotel suites into faculty apartments as well as classrooms.<sup>92</sup>

The conversion of the hotel building from one function to another marked yet another transition in the life of the hotel building as it became adapted through the renovations into a multi-use facility. The school reportedly adopted a cautious attitude toward the renovations, with a minimum of interventions made to the structure. Former bathrooms were used as kitchens, and suites of bedrooms were retained or combined to form the faculty apartments. Although such minimal intervention sometimes produced awkward living arrangements, the building once again proved its capabilities for functional adaptability.

As a result of the maintenance of its architectural integrity, the Residence was nominated and placed on the Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places in 1978 and on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979. The



years of 1982 through 1985 saw additional renovations made to the building, including the restoration of the expansive porch. The Residence continues to this day to house the administration, assembly and dining facilities as well as other ancillary school functions. Despite the utilization of much of the space in the Residence, it has been deemed that the building remains underutilized, and proposals have been suggested for the improved utilization of the space in the former hotel building, making it more economical to operate as well.<sup>93</sup>

In spite of the years and some changes, the former Bryn Mawr Hotel building still stands, as tall and proud as ever, despite the political and controversial issues surrounding its future use. Hopefully, these issues will be resolved and the building will remain on the landscape of Bryn Mawr well into the twenty-first century, if not beyond. Aided, defeated and altered by changes in technology and lifestyles and yet victorious in its adaptation to a century's worth of change, both the first and the second Bryn Mawr Hotel, sited by the railroad tracks of the Main Line of Public Works, have played a significant role in Philadelphia history.



## Notes to Chapter V

1. Lecian Von Bernuth, Interview with author, January 7, 1989.
2. The News of Bryn Mawr, October 14, 1887. Montgomery County Historical Society, Norristown, Pennsylvania.
3. Deed, June 11, 1888, Register of Deeds, Montgomery County Courthouse, Norristown, Pennsylvania.
4. Deed, April 1, 1890, Register of Deeds, Montgomery County Courthouse, Norristown, Pennsylvania.
5. "Charter of the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company," January 8, 1890, Miscellaneous Book #31, Montgomery County Historical Society, Norristown, Pennsylvania.
6. Deed, April 1, 1890, Register of Deeds, Montgomery County Courthouse, Norristown, Pennsylvania.
7. Ibid.
8. "Charter of the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company."
9. Ibid.
10. J.W. Townsend, Old "Main Line", 1922, p.56. Ludington Library, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.
11. "Charter of Bryn Mawr Hotel Company."
12. Philadelphia City Directories, 1890-1891. Of the original stockholders of the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company, 11 lived in the Rittenhouse Square area of the city, 3 lived in West Philadelphia 3 lived in Center City east of Broad Street, and 2 lived in Germantown.
13. Stephanie Hetos Cocke, "The Gilded Age Estates of Lower Merion Township," (Master's thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1987).
14. Philadelphia City Directories, 1890-1891.
15. Jean Barth Toll, ed. Montgomery County: Second Hundred Years. Vol. 2 (Montgomery County: Montgomery County Federation of Historical Societies, 1983), p. 1346.



16. Alexander J. Cassatt was president of the railroad company between the years of 1899 and 1906, the year of his death.
17. Toll, p. 1346. Joseph Sinnott continued to operate Henry C. Gibson's father's whiskey distillery, Henry C. Gibson and Company, under the name of Moore and Sinnott.
18. Philadelphia City Directories, 1890-1895.
19. Toll, p. 1346.
20. Alan Trachtenberg, in his Incorporation of America, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982) discusses the influence which the railroad industry had on the development of nineteenth and twentieth century American corporations.
21. James F. O'Gorman's book The Architecture of Frank Furness, (Philadelphia: Falcon Press, 1973) discusses the life and career of Frank Furness at length. A listing of all of Furness' work can be found in Roger Moss' and Sandra Tatman's Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects 1700- 1930, (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1985), pp.287-296.
22. Toll, p. 1346.
23. Tatman and Moss, pp. 287-296.
24. Townsend, in his Old "Main Line" has made this attribution on p. 56.
25. The renewed interest in Frank Furness was furthered by an exhibition of his work at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and by O'Gorman's 1973 catalogue accompanying the exhibit.
26. Richard Guy Wilson, "Nineteenth Century American Resorts and Hotels," Victorian Resorts and Hotels, ed. Richard Guy Wilson (Philadelphia: Victorian Society of America, 1972), p. 14.
27. O'Gorman, p. 58.
28. Robert A. M. Stern, Pride of Places (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1986), p. 169.
29. Hyman Myers, "National Register of Historic Places-Nomination Form," prepared for the National Park Service of the United States Department of the Interior, 1979.
30. Ibid.





31. Wilson, p. 16.
32. Furness, Evans and Company, "Bryn Mawr Hotel," book of rendering, hotel description and floor plans, n.d., Lower Merion Historical Society, Rosemont, Pennsylvania.
33. Ibid.
34. Townsend, pp. 55-56.
35. Furness, Evans and Company, "Bryn Mawr Hotel."
36. Francis Oakford Moore, Notes on the architecture of the Residence Building, n.d., The Baldwin School Archives, The Baldwin School, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.
37. George Augustus Sala, Temple Bar Magazine, 1866, in Nikolaus Pevsner, A History of Building Types (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), p. 182.
38. Instead of using the directional terms such as "north" and "south," "right" and "left" are used here because of the lack of a precise north-axis of the hotel building.
39. The term "passage" here is used as Frank Furness used it on his floor plans, to denote what is now generally called a hall. The terms "Main Hall," "Entrance Hall," and "Hall" are used by Furness and Evans in the traditional sense and denote not passageways but large common spaces.
40. Furness and Evans, on their floor plans of the Bryn Mawr Hotel, use the term "porch" instead of the term "verandah." To remain consistent with the architects' floor plans, the term will be used here as well.
41. Hyman Myers, "National Register of Historic Places-Nomination Form."
42. This term denotes curved walls which are formed here by the tower element.
43. This space was probably used to house members of the staff of the resort hotel.
44. Betsy Blackman and Elizabeth Cromley, "On the Verandah: Resorts of the Catskills," in Victorian Resorts and Hotels, ed. Richard Guy Wilson (Philadelphia: Victorian Society of America, 1982), p. 51.
45. Ibid. p. 54.



46. Lecian Von Bernuth, Interview.
47. Mary Ann Conkle, Taped interview, "Oral History Project," Radnor Public Library, Wayne, Pennsylvania.
48. Lecian Von Bernuth, Interview.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid.
51. Furness Evans and Company, "Bryn Mawr Hotel."
52. Amy Whitney, "Architecture As History," (Student paper, Bryn Mawr College, 1986), p.8, The Baldwin School Archives, The Baldwin School, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.
53. Saralinda Hooker, Frank Furness: His Legacy To Us," Bulletin of the Baldwin School, vol.42, no.1 (March 1976).
54. Thomas Hine, "Saving the Fancy Style of Once Popular Resorts," Philadelphia Inquirer, June 3, 1979.
55. Whitney, p. 9.
56. Heidi Li, Comment made to Amy Whitney in Whitney, "Architecture as History," p.10.
57. Evers et al., Resorts of the Catskills (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977), pp. 17-19.
58. Sidney George Fisher in A Philadelphia Perspective: The Diary of Sidney George Fisher 1834- 1871, ed. Nicholas Wainwright (Philadelphia: Winchell Company, 1987), p. 56.
59. Lecian Von Bernuth, Interview.
60. "Amusements," The Bryn Mawr Hotel brochure, 1911, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
61. Lecian Von Bernuth. Interview.
62. "Amusements," The Bryn Mawr Hotel brochure.
63. News item, Home News, September 16, 1895.
64. Ibid.
65. News item, Home News, September 27, 1895.
66. Announcement, Philadelphia Inquirer, May 14, 1893.



67. Ibid., June 25, 1893.
68. Lecian Von Bernuth, Interview.
69. News item, Philadelphia Press, September 16, 1908.
70. Lecian Von Bernuth, Interview.
71. This woman, wife of New York hotelier William Waldorf Astor, was originally from Rosemont, Pennsylvania, which is adjacent to Bryn Mawr.
72. In the Philadelphia Inquirer, September 17, 1908, Mrs. Alexander Van Rensselaer was reported as being the richest women in America.
73. This list of names appeared in the Philadephia Inquirer, September 17, 1908.
74. News item, Home News, September 16, 1895.
75. Ibid.
76. News item, Philadelphia Press, September 16, 1908.
77. Ibid. September 17, 1908.
78. Ibid.
79. Bryn Mawr Horse Show, Bryn Mawr Horse Show Association, 1900, 1906-1908, 1912. Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
80. The Baldwin School was founded by Miss Florence Baldwin, a school teacher, in 1888 at the request of Mr. James Rhoads, President of Bryn Mawr College, to prepare girls for entrance into the college. The school was originally located in a small house on the corner of Morris and Montgomery Avenues, across from the site of the hotel. The school continued to grow, and in 1896 it leased the Bryn Mawr Hotel during the winter months of the year for the first time and would continue to do so until 1913, when it occupied the building on a year-round basis.
81. Deed, April 1, 1890, Recorder of Deeds, Montgomery County Courthouse, Norristown, Pennsylvania.
82. Elsie Raser, Class of 1897, Brief history of school, The Baldwin School Archives, The Baldwin School, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.



83. Deed, January 29, 1909, Recorder of Deeds, Montgomery County Courthouse, Norristown, Pennsylvania.
84. Lease between the Bryn Mawr Real Estate Company and The Baldwin School, 1919, The Baldwin School Archives, The Baldwin School, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.
85. Ibid.
86. Ibid.
87. Announcement by The Baldwin School to alumni, students and parents, n.d., The Baldwin School Archives, The Baldwin School, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.
88. Martin and Lundy, Inc., "Brief History of Baldwin School," Survey of the Baldwin School, January 3, 1970, The Baldwin School Archives, The Baldwin School, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.
89. Annual Report of The Baldwin School, February 28, 1923, The Baldwin School Archives, The Baldwin School, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.
90. "A Good Investment," Bond notice for The Baldwin School, April 10, 1924, The Baldwin School Archives, The Baldwin School, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.
91. Mrs. Reed Shoemaker to students, faculty and parents explaining the closing of the boarding facilities, August 15, 1974. The Baldwin School Archives, The Baldwin School, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.
92. Unsigned floor plans were found documenting either proposed or actual renovations made to the Residence, April 8, 1975. The Baldwin School Archives, The Baldwin School, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.
93. Local preservationist, Conversation with author, June 1, 1989, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.





## Conclusion

The relationship between the development of the Main Line of Public Works, the Paoli Accommodation of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and specifically, the Bryn Mawr Hotel has been explored in depth in this paper. The formation of these relationships was a result of several significant phenomena in the United States, occurring between the middle and the end of the nineteenth century. These phenomena included not only the onslaught of the Industrial Revolution and the development of the railroad and the all-powerful railroad corporation, but also the creation of leisure time as a result of the increased mechanization of the workplace; the development and acceptance of the custom of taking summer vacations; and the increase in travelling to various resort destinations.

One of the entities treated in this thesis, the Bryn Mawr Hotel, is, in both its first and second incarnations, an architectural artifact that represents on several levels some of the tremendous influences and the concomitant economic and social changes which the railroad had on the entire country and, specifically, upon the lands adjoining the railroad in and around Bryn Mawr. The influence of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company's hotel, the first Bryn Mawr Hotel, upon the landscape of



the outskirts of Philadelphia and upon the lifestyles of Philadelphians is, in fact, a microcosm of broader developments and influences which railroad companies had on their adjoining landscapes as well as on the lifestyles of people all across the country. As the advancing railroad and its parent and various subsidiary companies caused the expansion of Philadelphia by bringing about the development of its outlying "borderlands" and suburbs, so too did the railroad effect the expansion of America, with its vast network of tracks making possible people's use and shaping of the available land.

By examining the particular effects of the Paoli Accommodation of the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company upon the landscape of Bryn Mawr, which this paper has done, a more complete understanding of the vast and complex influence of the railroad and the all-encompassing sphere of power of the railroad corporation may be gained. By studying specifically how the Paoli Accommodation markedly changed the vacation, travel and living patterns of Philadelphians it can be seen why the railroad proved to be such a significant agent of changing the vacation, travel and living patterns of Americans all across the land.

The first hotel at Bryn Mawr, or the Keystone Hotel as it was sometimes called, could not have enjoyed its popularity without the access provided by the Paoli



Accommodation. By offering westbound service to vacationers and commuters alike, the Paoli Accommodation made available to the urban inhabitants of Philadelphia new scenery and new countryside to explore, visit and, eventually, inhabit. The methods by which the railroad and the resort hotel achieved and changed their goals over the years have been explored in this study.

This paper has illustrated that through speculative and strategic land development and the use of ingenious promotional devices by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, all methods which were forerunners of today's multi-million dollar advertising and public relations campaigns, the small, rural, Welsh village of Humphreysville grew into an attractive, inviting resort destination and ultimately into a desirable suburban community. This is not to say that the area would not have been developed had it not been for the Pennsylvania Railroad Company; rarely does rolling countryside in the vicinity of a thriving metropolis go untouched. However, it can be said that through the development efforts of the Real Estate Department under the direction of William Hasell Wilson, the community of Bryn Mawr was able to develop into a quasi-exclusive community for upper-middle to upper class Philadelphians.

By building the resort hotel at Bryn Mawr in the 1870's and influencing the construction of the second Bryn



Mawr Hotel building in the 1890's, both of which were designed by prominent local architects, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company was successful in achieving its ends- the development of the land adjoining its right of way and the attraction of passengers to use the Paoli Accommodation. In doing this, the company left an indelible physical imprint upon the landscape of Bryn Mawr and upon the social climate there. Consequently, the relationship between the growing Pennsylvania Railroad Company, its real estate ventures and actual buildings upon the land gave shape to an entire region.

The resort hotel at Bryn Mawr in its previous and in its present guise stands as a proud monument to the power of the railroad corporation of the nineteenth century, which was the prototype for all big business in America in both the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. In addition, the Bryn Mawr Hotel stands also as a monument to the mighty Pennsylvania Railroad Company and the tremendous power it once wielded in the Philadelphia region, both economically and socially. Significantly, the form and design of the present structure serves as a rare stylistic example of the multi-faceted, original and individualistic nature of the work of Philadelphia architect Frank Furness, who, today, is considered one of the most important Victorian architects in America and who was then a preferred architect for the Pennsylvania





Railroad Company and its directors.

The Bryn Mawr Hotel exists as a vivid reminder of past regional and national social practices and certain institutions which continue to this day in our society. As Europeans in earlier centuries had their healthful retreats in the way of mountain resorts, mineral springs and thermal spas, so too did Americans. The Bryn Mawr Hotel was a fine local example of such a retreat. This particular function of the hotel has often been neglected in favor of the more obvious aspects of the hotel building, such as its picturesque architectural features, its present-day use as a well-known private school and, in particular, the source of its architectural design. As architectural critic Thomas Hine observed, "Our last resorts tell about what we were by reminding us of past pleasures."<sup>1</sup> As such, the hotel building as it now stands harkens back to a type of American pursuit of health and pleasure prevalent in the nineteenth century. widespread today, and the pursuit of pleasure, which intensified during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

The resort hotel at Bryn Mawr was Philadelphia's local version of the resorts of the Berkshire Mountains of Massachusetts, the Catskill Mountains of New York and the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania. The country resort hotel at Bryn Mawr served its visitors in a variety of ways,



providing physical, mental, visual and social relief to the urban inhabitants who flocked annually to its rural surroundings complete with its green, rolling hills, fresh, clean air and lively, fashionable society. By so doing, as has been shown here, the Bryn Mawr Hotel quickly became an attractive retreat for a large number of people whose ailments ranged from being physical in nature to, simply, the need to experience a pastoral landscape or fresh faces in a new social atmosphere.

By understanding the origins and the contextual significance of the present Bryn Mawr Hotel structure, how it functioned in conjunction with the development of the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and the reasons behind its very existence, the particular significance of its building type as a resort hotel and the historical phenomena which it represents assume new meaning. With the above-mentioned historical significance of the Bryn Mawr Hotel, the phenomena it represented and its associations with a famous Philadelphia architect, the cause for the continued preservation of the Bryn Mawr Hotel building in the form of the present-day Baldwin School is justifiably furthered. The fact that the hotel building still exists in its almost-original form, albeit in another guise, can be appreciated anew.

Not only does the Bryn Mawr Hotel building remain, but it continues to be utilized today. This utilization,



however, is not without its costs. The continuing use of the building for institutional purposes requires large amounts of adaptation to occur on the part of the building and its occupants. The adaptation of a nineteenth-century building such as the Bryn Mawr Hotel structure into a viable, functioning building capable of withstanding the needs of the late twentieth-century is often hard, if not impossible to achieve. That the Bryn Mawr Hotel building still stands and actively contributes to its community in a vital manner is a remarkable thing.

In spite of increasing operating costs and the financial concerns of the directors of The Baldwin School, the old hotel building's vitality and its contribution to community memory should not be lost. It is important to preserve not only the architectural artifact itself, but also the historical evidence it bears. The history of the hotel building-turned-boarding school in its geographical, economical and social context needs to be preserved in order to enrich our present understanding and to underpin our preservation efforts. As Baldwin School historian Frances Oakford Moore has eloquently stated, so far the Bryn Mawr Hotel has survived the ravages of time like a:

very elegant and very gallant old Victorian lady plunged into the twentieth-century and adjusting to the change, not easily, but very valiantly.<sup>2</sup>

May the twenty-first century be a good one for the old Bryn Mawr Hotel building.



## Notes to Conclusion

1. Thomas Hine, "Saving the Fancy Style of Once Popular Resorts," Philadelphia Inquirer, June 3, 1979.
2. Frances Oakford Moore, The Baldwin School Archives, The Baldwin School, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.



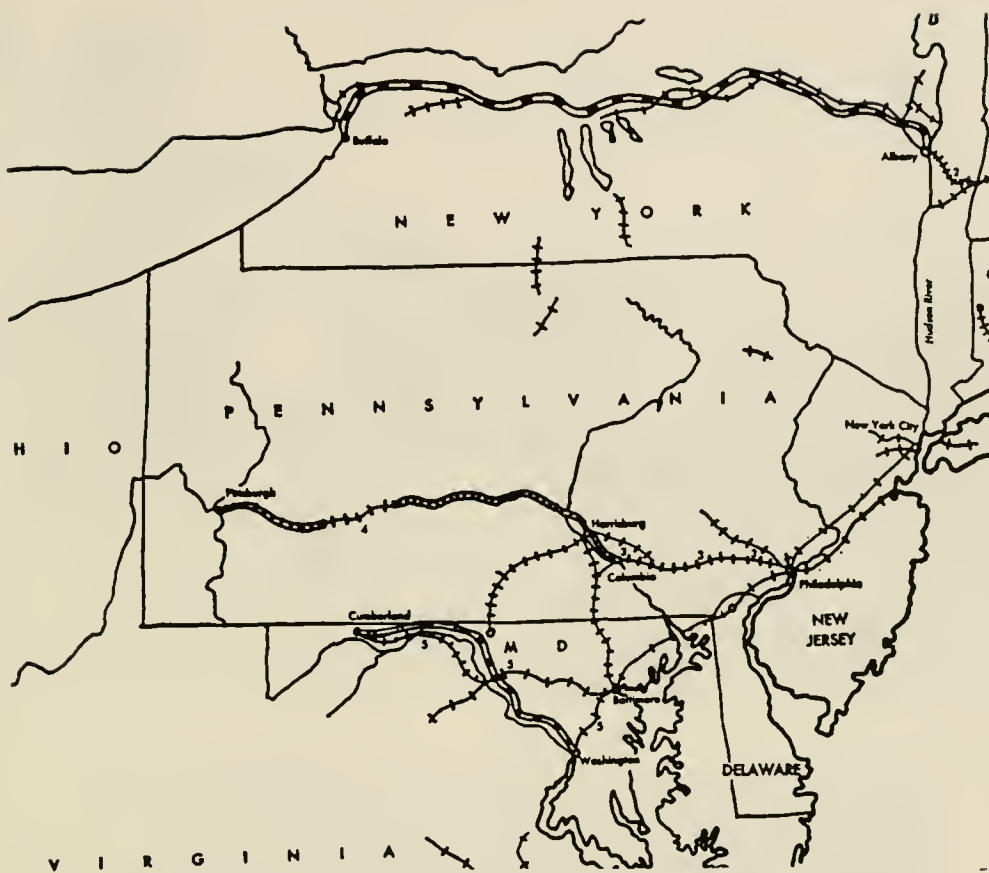


## Illustrations



Figure 1. The proximity of the second Bryn Mawr hotel structure to the Main Line railroad.











<i>New York City:</i>		
(Used the Hudson R. to Albany)		
	Erie Canal	Buffalo 1825
<i>Philadelphia:</i>		
<i>Pennsylvania Main Line</i>		
	Philadelphia and Columbia	Columbia 1834
	Main Line Canal	Pittsburgh 1834
	Portage Railroad (natural)	Hollidaysburg to Johnstown 1834
<i>Baltimore (and Washington):</i>		
	Baltimore and Ohio	Cumberland 1842
	Chesapeake and Ohio Canal	Cumberland 1850

Figure 2. The Main Line of Public Works traversing the state of Pennsylvania, showing sections of both canal and railroad between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.



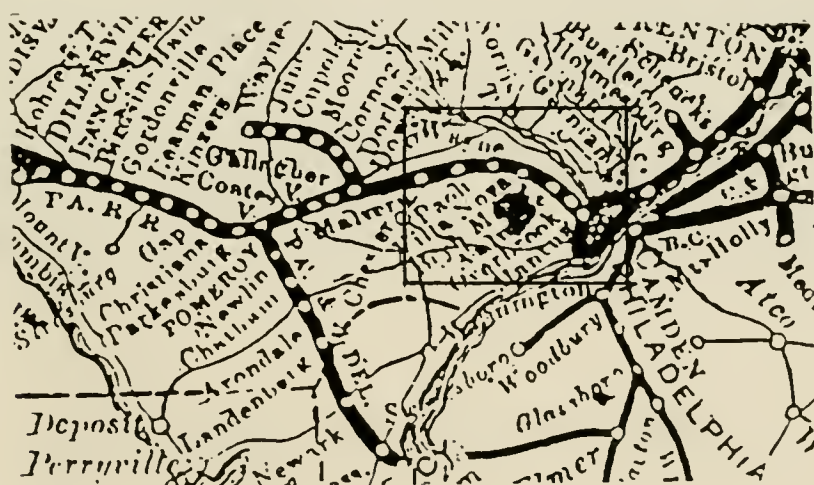
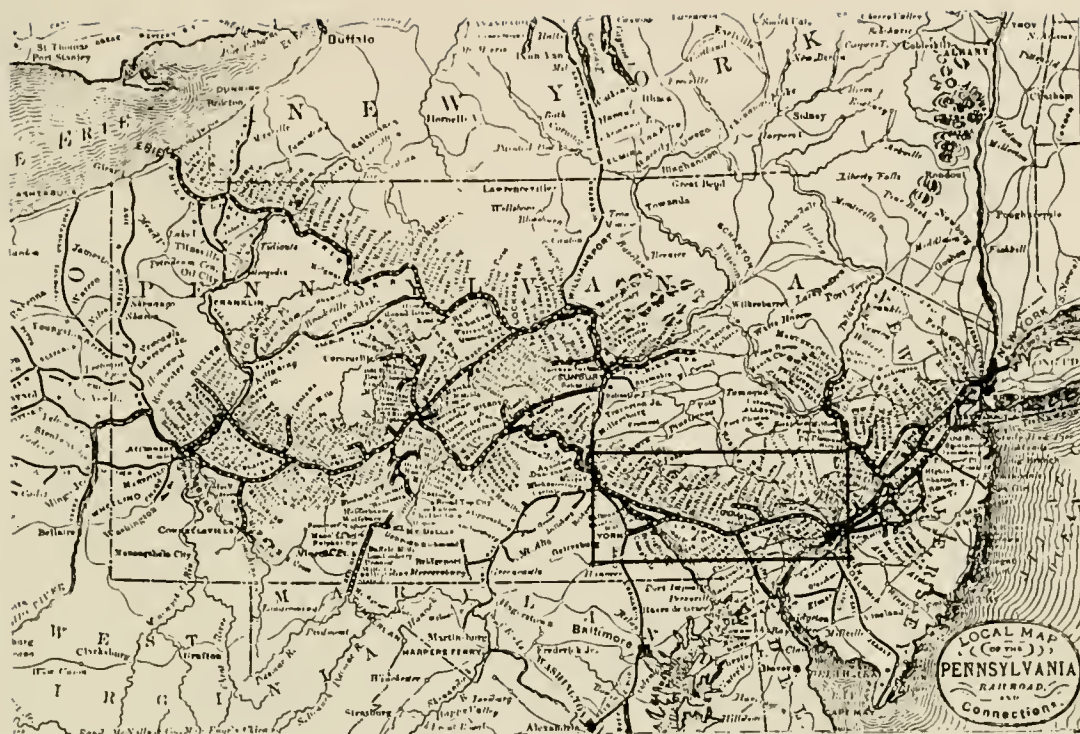


Figure 3. The location of the Paoli Accommodation of the Philadelphia Division of the Main Line and the stations along its way.











Figure 5. The Bryn Mawr Station





Figure 6. Engraving of passengers on the footbridge at the Bryn Mawr station.



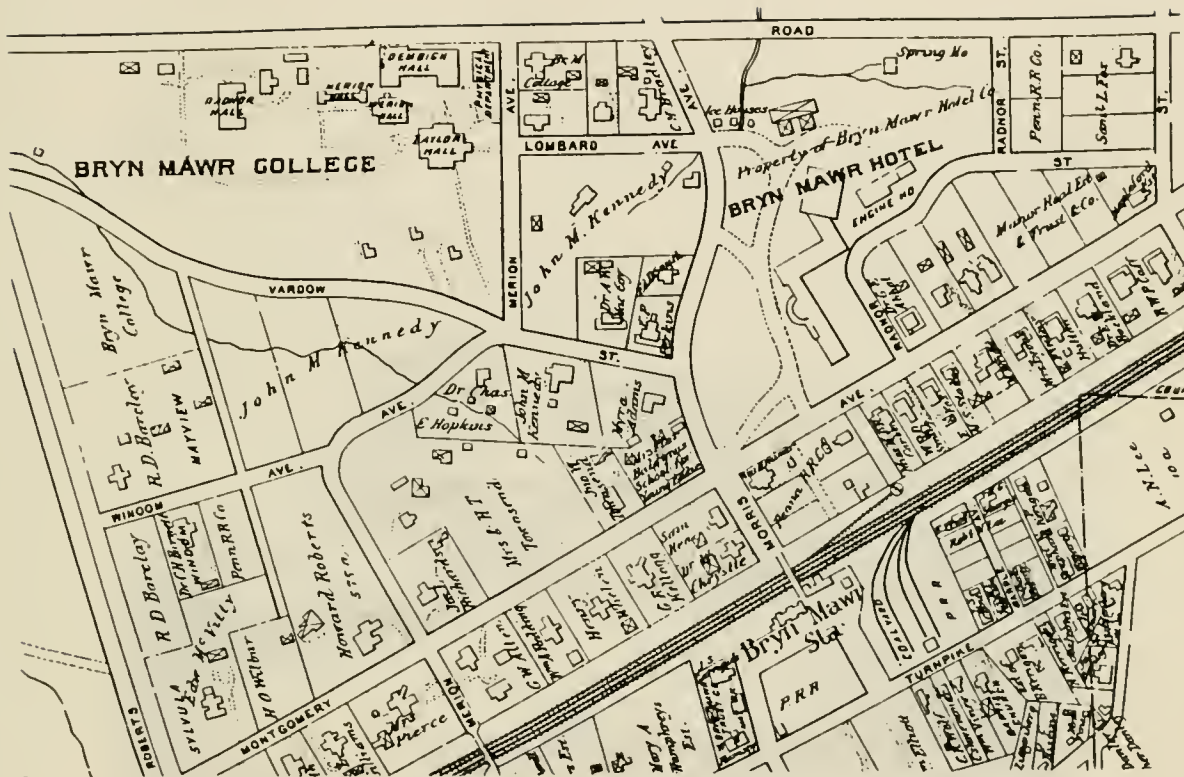


Figure 7. Subdivision and suburban development surrounding the Bryn Mawr Hotel





Figure 8. Photograph of the first Bryn Mawr Hotel, circa 1871.





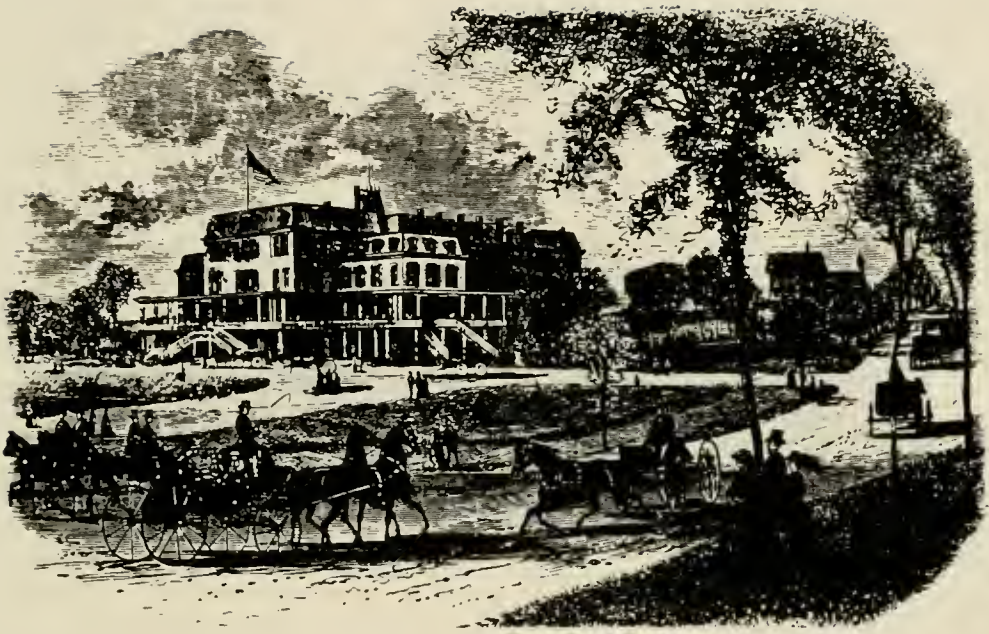


Figure 9. Engraving of the first Bryn Mawr Hotel





**Figure 10.** Photograph of the first Bryn Mawr Hotel with additions and renovations, circa 1876.



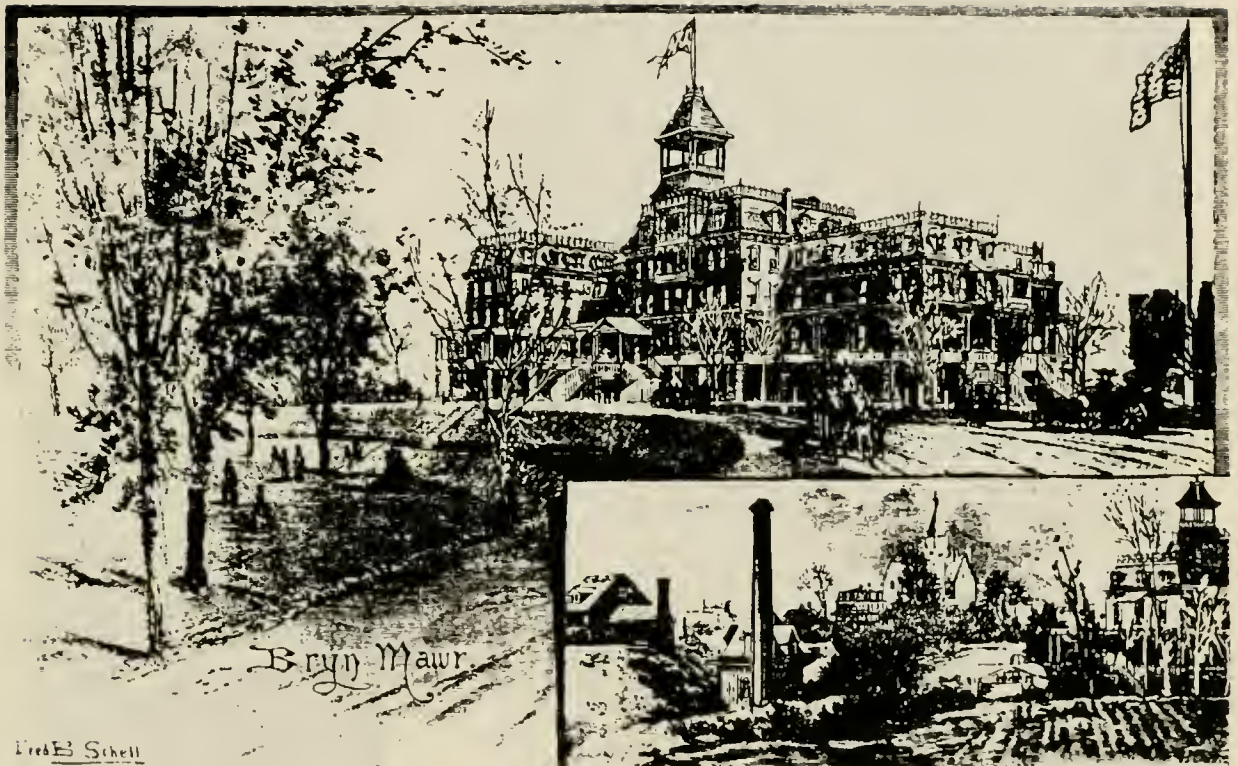


Figure 11. Engraving of the first Bryn Mawr Hotel and its environs.





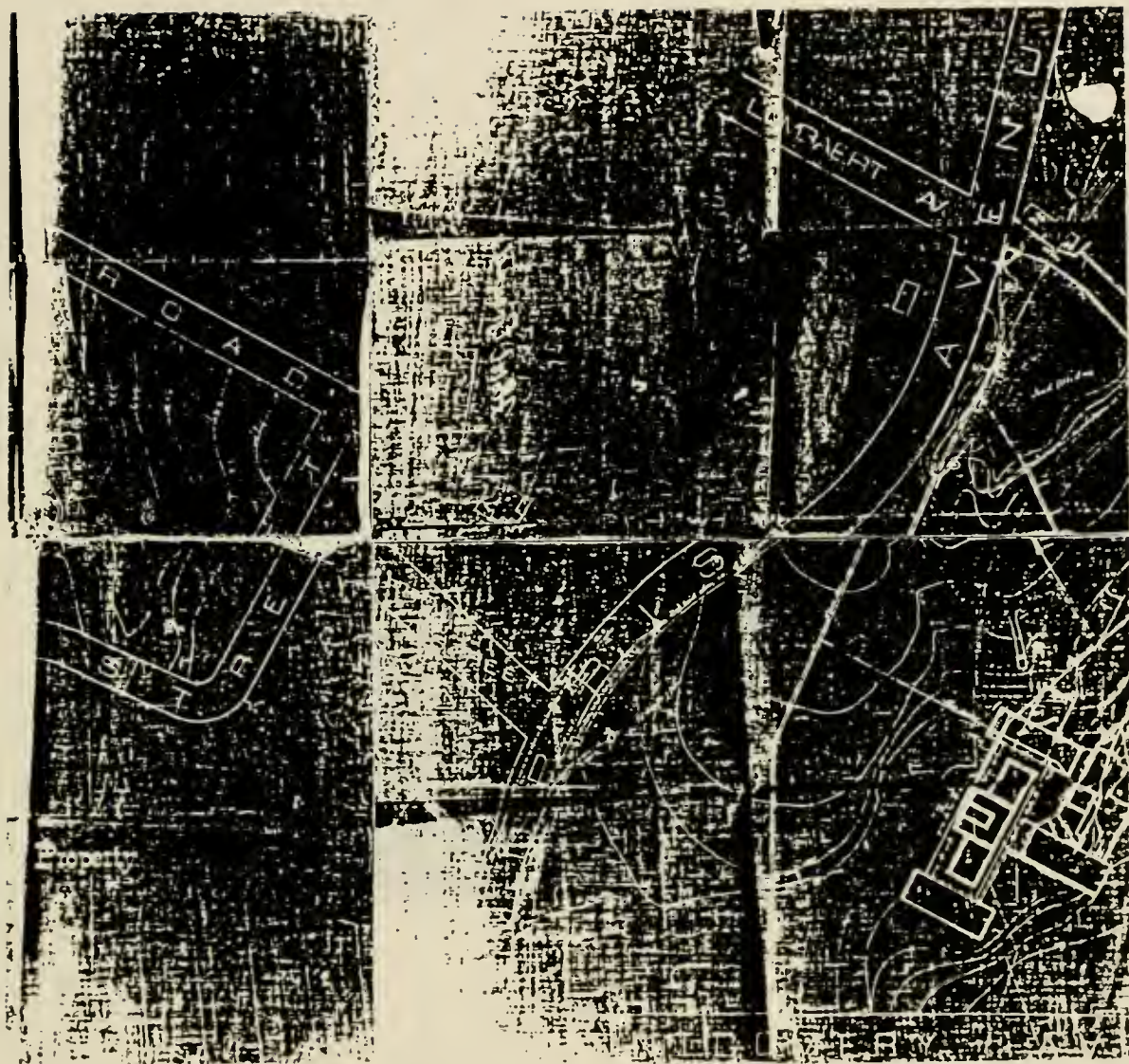


Figure 12. Blueprint of the grounds and footprint of the first Bryn Mawr Hotel.

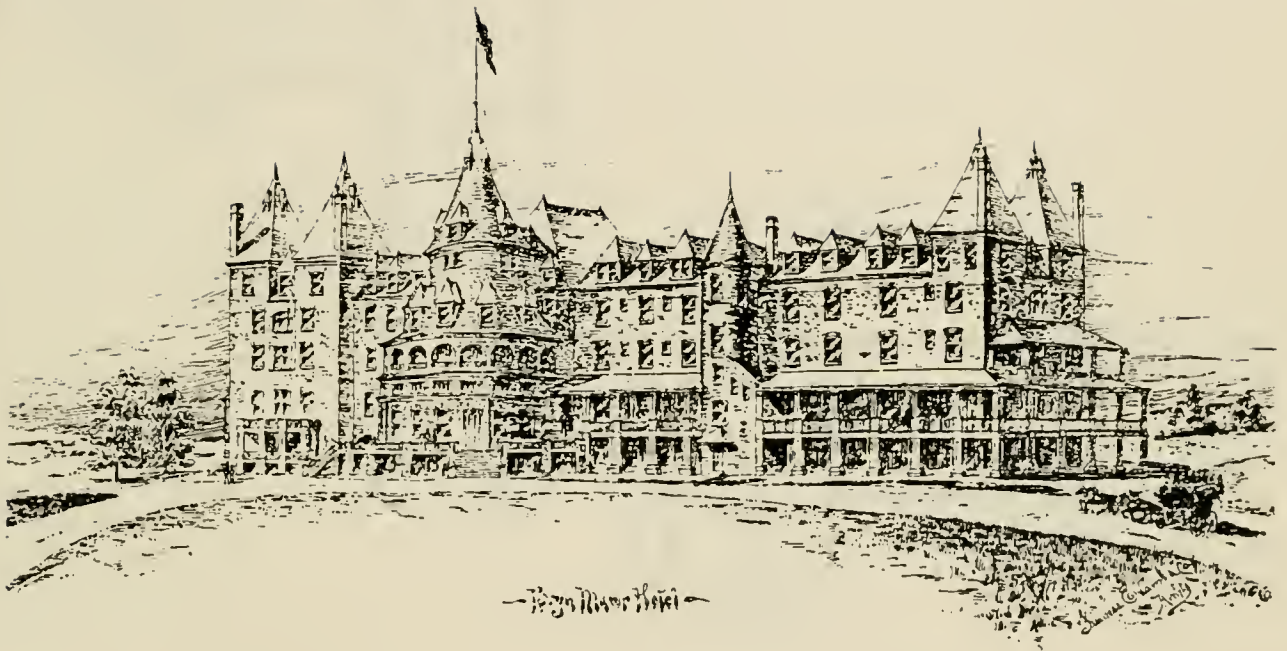






**Figure 13.** Photograph of the second Bryn Mawr Hotel,  
No date.





**Figure 14.** Rendering of the second Bryn Mawr Hotel by Furness, Evans and Company.



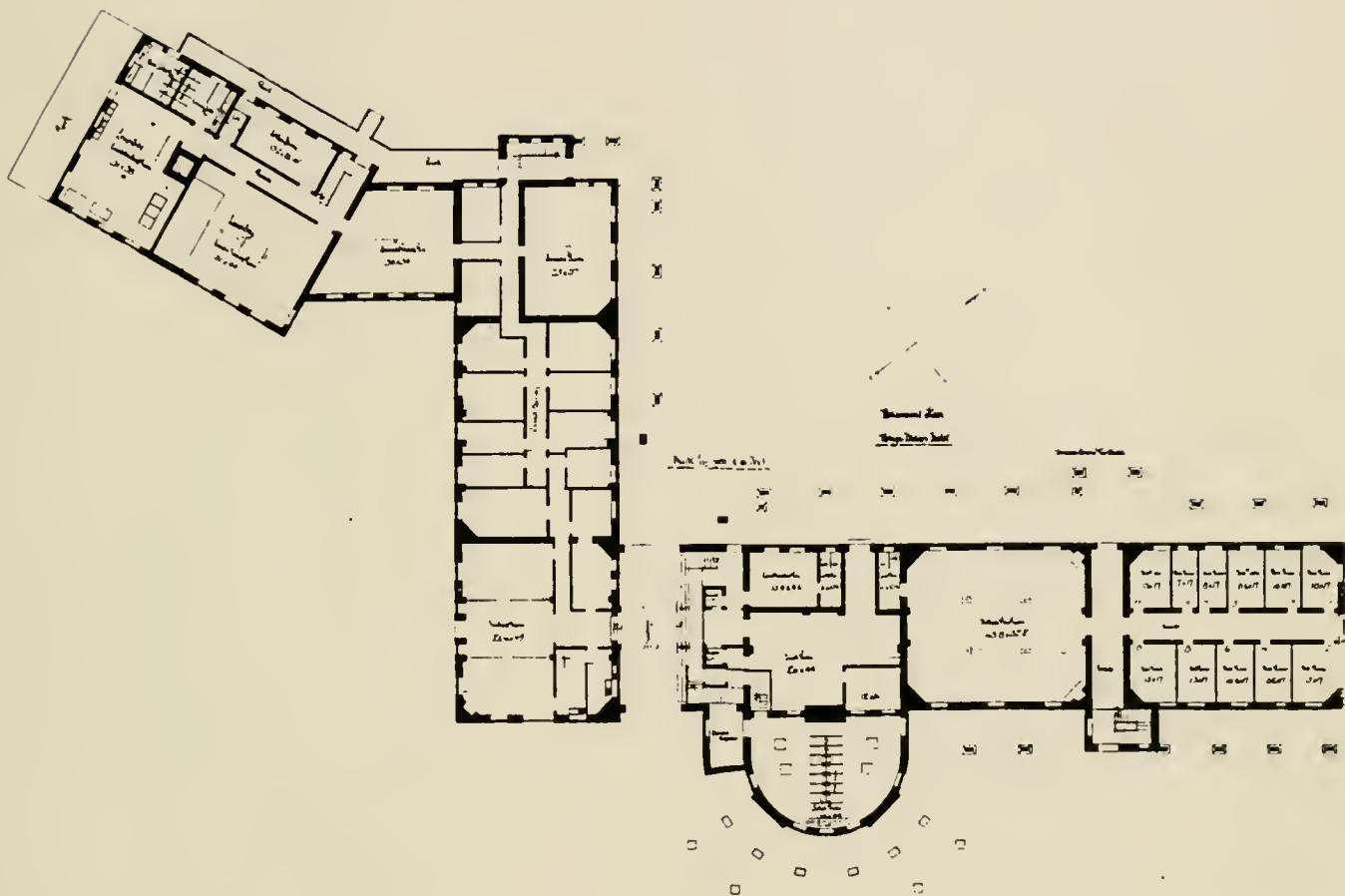


Figure 15. Floor plan of the Basement Floor, Furness, Evans and Company.



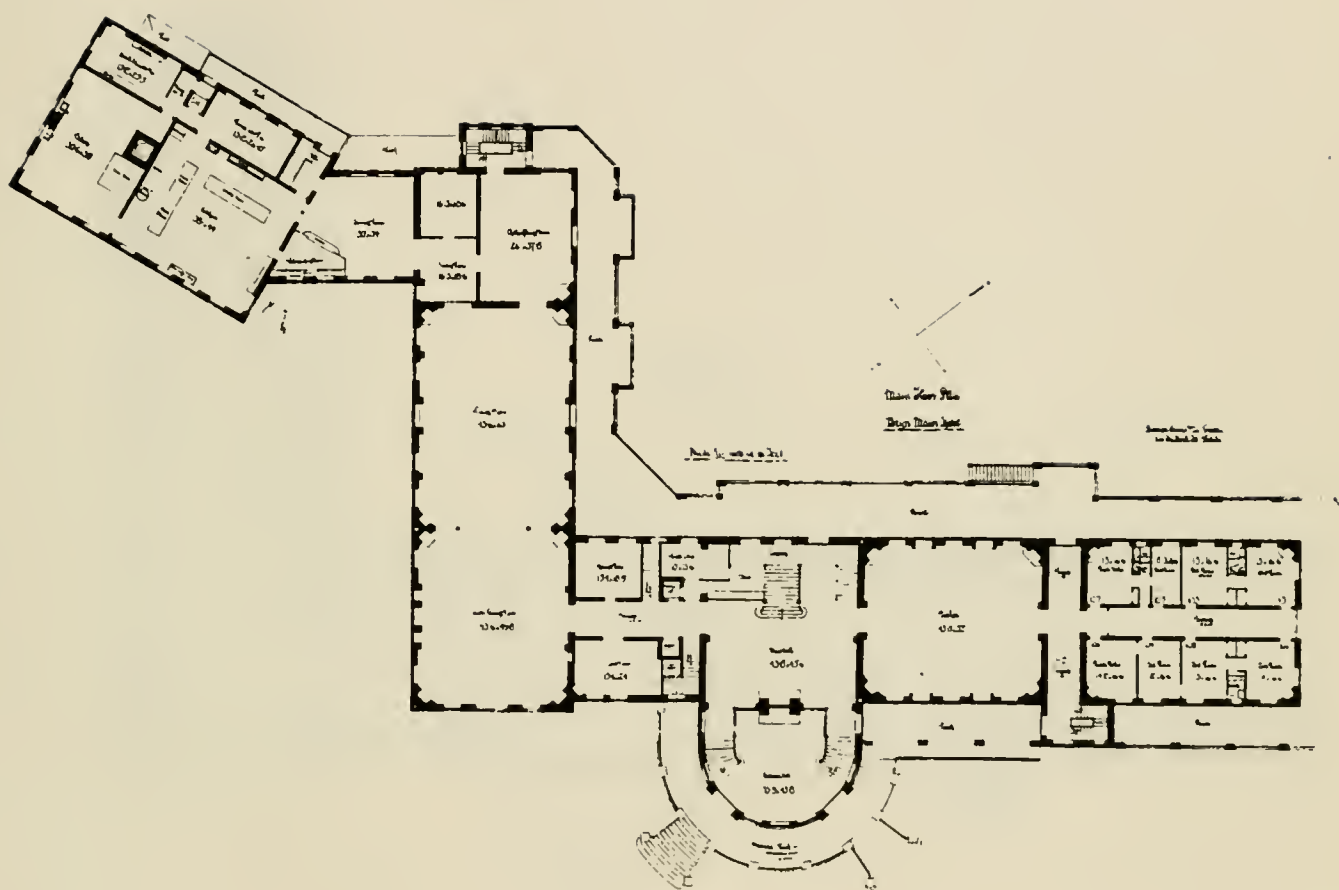


Figure 16. Floor plan of the Main Floor





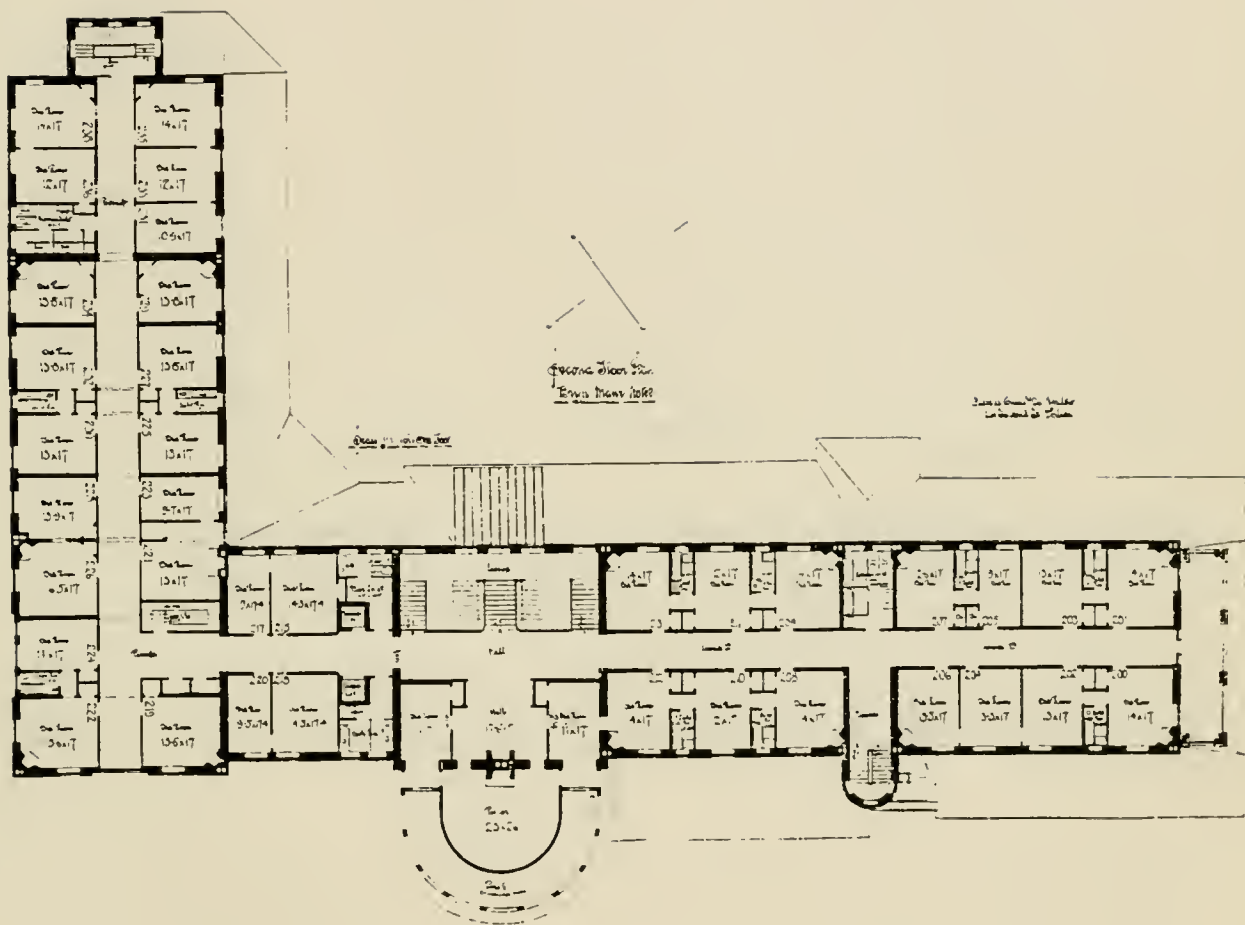


Figure 17. Floor plan of the Second Floor.







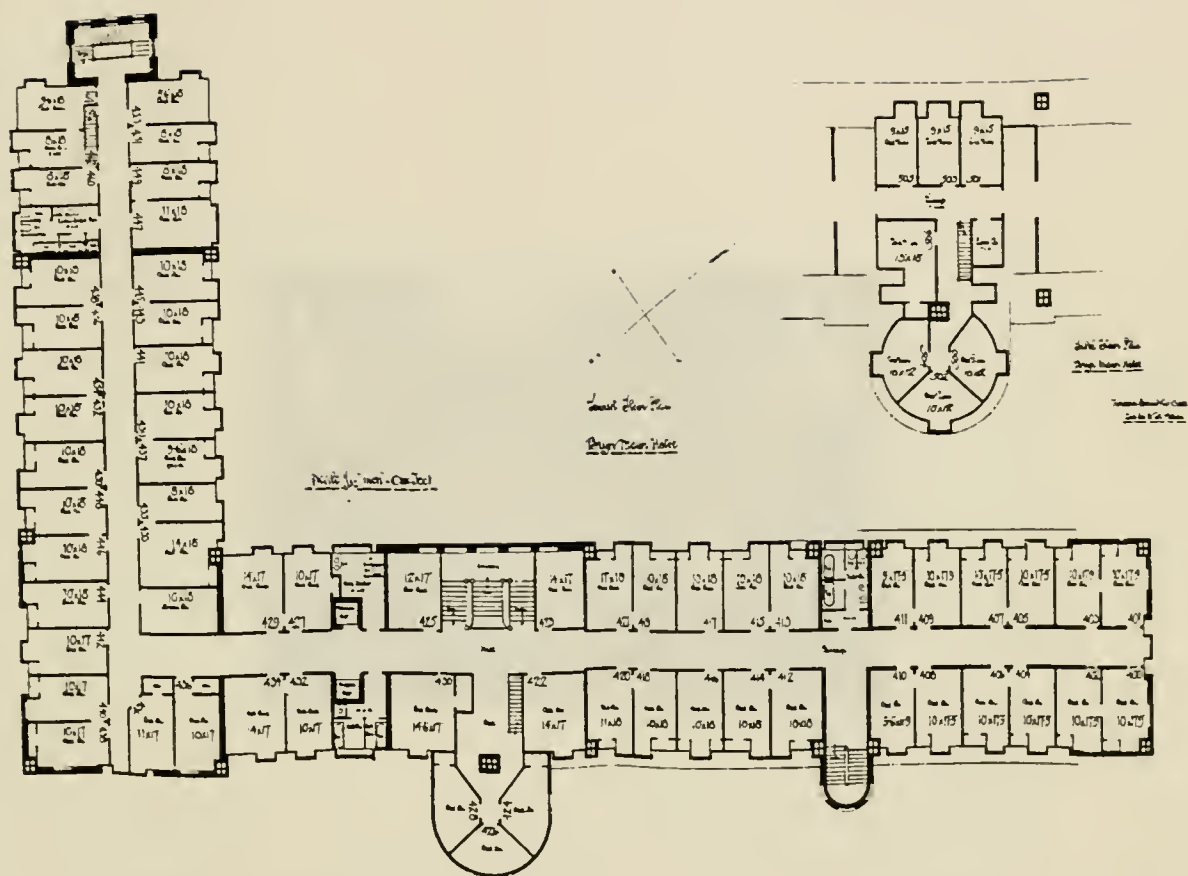


Figure 19. Floor plan of the Fourth and Fifth Floors





**Figure 20.** Photograph of the porch of the second hotel building







Figure 21. Photograph of the Entrance Hall





Figure 22. Photograph of the Main Hall





**Figure 23.** Photograph of the clay tennis court  
circa 1911



**Figure 24.** Photograph of the fourth hole of the  
golf course, circa 1911





Figure 25. Postcard of the Bryn Mawr Horse Show, 1908







Figure 26. Postcard of the Bryn Mawr Hotel and Miss Baldwin's School, 1907



Figure 27. Postcard of the Bryn Mawr Hotel and Miss Baldwin's School



## Appendix A

### The Middle Division

The particular division of the Main Line system known as the Middle Division eventually included both overland and water transport (Fig. 2). Although initially this section of the Main Line was intended to consist entirely of canal, it was decided that, due to the obstruction of the Allegheny Mountains, the canal would not traverse the entire route from Columbia to Pittsburgh but would extend to Hollidaysburg only.<sup>1</sup> At this juncture, the Allegheny, or Old, Portage Railroad<sup>2</sup> would continue the route across the Allegheny Mountains until it reached Johnstown, where the Western Division would begin.

Construction of the Middle Division Canal began on July 4, 1826. Originating at the Susquehanna River, the canal followed the east bank of the Susquehanna before joining it at Middletown, Pennsylvania. From the west bank of the Susquehanna River the canal followed the Juniata River valley until it reached Hollidaysburg, at which point the Allegheny Portage Railroad originated.<sup>3</sup>

Construction of the Allegheny Portage Railroad of the Middle Division started in 1831 and was opened for use in 1836. Financed by the state, the Portage line ascended and traversed the Allegheny Mountains for 172 miles before



descending to Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Consisting primarily of ten inclined planes, 153 culverts and 4 viaducts, the Portage Road was considered an engineering marvel of its day and was lauded in David Stevenson's Sketch of the Civil Engineering of North America, published in London in 1838. In describing the Portage Road, Stevenson said that America

now numbers among its many wonderful artificial lines of communication, a mountain railway, which, in boldness of design, and difficulty of execution, I can compare to no modern I have ever seen, excepting perhaps the passes of the Simplon, and Mont Cenis, in Sardinia.<sup>4</sup>

The famous Portage Road has also been called:

a monument to the intelligence, enterprise and public spirit of Pennsylvania more honorable than the temples and pyramids of Egypt, or the triumphal arches and columns of Rome. They were erected to commemorate the names of tyrants or the battles of victorious chieftan, while these magnificent works are intended to subserve the interests of agriculture, manufactures and commerce-to encourage the arts of peace-to advance the prosperity and happiness of the whole people of the United States-to strengthen the bonds of the Union.<sup>5</sup>

As phenomenal as the Old Portage Road was, such a marvel proved to be too costly and impractical to operate. William F. Johnston stated on January 1, 1850 that

The Portage Railroad, from the beginning of our line of improvements to the present



time, has been a serious obstacle to the business of the community and the occasion of trade seeking other channels to the Atlantic markets.<sup>6</sup>

Hence, amidst years of controversy concerning the dangers and impracticalities of the Old Portage Road, which started almost immediately upon the completion of the road in 1836, new surveys of the route across the Allegheny Mountains were conducted. The Canal Commission, which still officially operated the Main Line of Public Works State Works, finally began construction to replace the road in 1852.

Costing over \$2,000,000, the project included the elimination of five inclined planes on the line as part of the construction of the New Portage Road. Construction of the New Portage Road continued through the sale of the Main Line of Public Works to the Pennsylvania Railroad Company in 1857 and then was completed by the system's new owner. Construction work of the the New Portage Road was finished in 1863, thus making the entire line from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh complete.<sup>7</sup>

### **The Western Division**

The Western Division of the Main Line of Public Works consisted of a canal which originated at the canal basin at Johnstown and extended to the terminus in Pittsburgh for a total of 104 miles (Fig. 2). This canal followed the





valleys of the Conemaugh, Kiskiminetas and Allegheny rivers and contained 152 bridges, 16 aquaducts, a 1,000 foot tunnel and 66 locks, all constructed to accommodate an elevation which reached approximately 465 feet.<sup>8</sup>



## Notes to Appendix A

1. Elfreth Watkins, History of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania Railroad Company, 1896), p. 105.
2. These two terms are used interchangeably in various history books.
3. Edwin R. Alexander, The Pennsylvania Railroad Company (New York: W. W. Norton, 1947), p. 12.
4. William Hasell Wilson, Notes On the Internal Improvements of the State of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: Railway World, 1879), p. 75.
5. Anonymous quote in William Bender Wilson, History of the Pennsylvania Railroad (Philadelphia: Sherman and Company, 1895), p. 31.
6. William Bender Wilson, p. 144.
7. Ibid., pp. 137-142.
8. Ibid., pp. 13-14.



## Appendix B

### Incorporation of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company

In order to preserve trade between Philadelphia and the West, the state legislature decided to incorporate the use of an all-rail system due to unsatisfactory travel conditions which accompanied the use of the canals of the Middle and Western Divisions of the Main Line (see Appendix A). Freezing of the water in the wintertime, flooding of the canals in the springtime and delays caused by the transfers between the canals and railroads caused much delay in travel time over these routes.<sup>1</sup> The impracticality of the usage of canals in general due to adverse weather conditions is illustrated by Nile's Weekly Register, which reported in 1831 that

While both the Erie and the Delaware and Hudson Canals had been closed for a total of five months during the course of the year, the newly opened Baltimore and Ohio Railroad had ceased operation for only one day due to inclement weather conditions.<sup>2</sup>

The contest between the businessmen of Philadelphia and Baltimore continued for control of westward trade across southern Pennsylvania via an all-rail system. In response to competition felt by the previously incorporated Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company, on April



13, 1846 the Legislature of Pennsylvania passed "An Act to Incorporate the Pennsylvania Railroad Company" for the second time.<sup>3</sup> As such, this company was organized

with a view to promote the commerce and manufacturing of Philadelphia and the interior of the state.<sup>4</sup>

As a result of pressure from supporters of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company, the Pennsylvania State Legislature passed a bill which authorized the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to extend its own line into Pittsburgh just days after it chartered the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. However, because state loyalties were with the commercial standing of Philadelphia and the citizens of Pennsylvania, certain stipulations were attached to the bill of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company. These stipulations were the following:

that if a railroad was incorporated in [the 1846] session, to run between Harrisburg and Pittsburgh, within the limits of the State, and should have \$3,000,000 of stock subscribed, and 10% paid in, and its Letters Patent issued by the Governor, and thirty miles of road under contract prior to that date, the Governor should proclaim the fact, and thereupon the construction rights granted to The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company would be null and void, but this should not take effect unless the Stockholders of The Pennsylvania Railroad Company had paid into its Treasury \$1,000,000 and that fifteen miles of road had been put under contract at the Pittsburgh end of the line.<sup>5</sup>

Subsequent to the passage of this act, fervent appeals





were made to Philadelphia businessmen and to the City Council of Philadelphia, including the proposal to increase city debt and taxes, in order to raise the necessary subscription money to incorporate the company.<sup>6</sup> On February 25, 1847, the governor of the state issued a letters patent which incorporated the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.<sup>7</sup>

By July, the newly formed company had the required thirty miles under contract for construction and had also raised the specified amount of money as requested by the Act. Because the company met all of the requirements, on August 2, 1847, the Governor of Pennsylvania declared the previous act, which had given the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad the right of way through Pennsylvania, null and void.<sup>8</sup> Thus started the powerful reign of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, which, through its merge with the New York Central Railroad, would dominate the American railroad industry for the next 121 years, effecting profound changes upon the landscape as well as upon its inhabitants.

After the Pennsylvania Railroad Company was incorporated in 1847, construction continued on an all-rail line on the Middle and Western Divisions of the Main Line so that by December 10, 1852, an all-rail line was opened between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.<sup>9</sup> With the 1854 construction of the new terminal at 13th and Market



Streets by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and its newly acquired rights to use the West Philadelphia Railroad, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company was now able to widen the scope of its operations to include regions all across the state. Having completed many improvements, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company started to run three trains per day in each direction from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh, a trip which lasted between thirteen and seventeen hours.<sup>10</sup> Although the transportation line was still owned by the state Canal Commission, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company was gaining increasing power and control of the Main Line of Public Works. These historical facts are important in order to understand how the railroad company acquired enough leverage and real estate to enable it to build hotels and develop towns, such as Bryn Mawr, along the tracks of the Main Line.



## Notes to Appendix B

1. John F. Stover, American Railroads (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), p. 34.

2. Ibid.

3. Pennsylvania Railroad Company, By-Laws of the Board of Directors (Philadelphia: L. Johnson & Company, 1850), p. 10.

4. Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Twenty Third Annual Report of Directors of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company to Stockholders (Philadelphia, 1869), p. 19.

5. A. J. County, "Incorporation and Organization of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company," The Pennsylvania Railroad System, 1906, pp. 4-5.

6. "Opinion of John M. Read, Esquire, Against the Right of the City Councils to Subscribe for Stock In the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and To Increase the City Debt and Taxes For That Purpose," August 29, 1846, in By-Laws of the Board of Directors, p. 33, and A. J. County, The Pennsylvania Railroad System, p. 5.

7. County, p. 5.

8. Ibid.

9. William Bender Wilson, History of the Pennsylvania Railroad (Philadelphia: Sherman and Company, 1895), p. 5.

10. Ibid., p. 157.



## Appendix C

### The Purchase of the Main Line of Public Works

Although seemingly in control of much of the state-run transportation system, the Pennsylvania Railroad was not automatically guaranteed the ownership and control of the Main Line of Public Works. There was existing competition between the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and the Canal Commission, which originally created the westward bound transportation system. This competition was due to the increasing monopolization of the state-owned transportation line by the private railroad company. By the 1850's a movement was started by citizens to sell the system, which by now had become an unprofitable burden to the taxpayers and to the Canal Commission as well.<sup>1</sup>

Finally in April of 1854, the Main Line of Public Works was offered for sale for \$20,000,000. Due to a lack of interest in the transportation system, this figure was cut in half to \$10,000,000 the following year. Despite such a drastic decrease in the sales price, the state continued to be unsuccessful in attracting a buyer for the system. After the price was further reduced to \$7,500,000 in 1857, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company purchased the system with the stipulations that upon its purchase and with an additional payment of \$1,500,000, all freight





tonnage taxes would be waived.<sup>2</sup>

Following the purchase of the state system, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company completed the New Portage Railroad, which the Canal Commission had begun in 1853, across the Allegheny Mountains. The completion of this road and hence the entire line from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh occurred in 1863.<sup>3</sup>



## Notes to Appendix C

1. Edwin P. Alexander, The Pennsylvania Railroad Company (New York: W. W. Norton, 1947), p. 16.
2. William Bender Wilson, History of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania Railroad Company, 1896), pp. 142-160.
3. Ibid.



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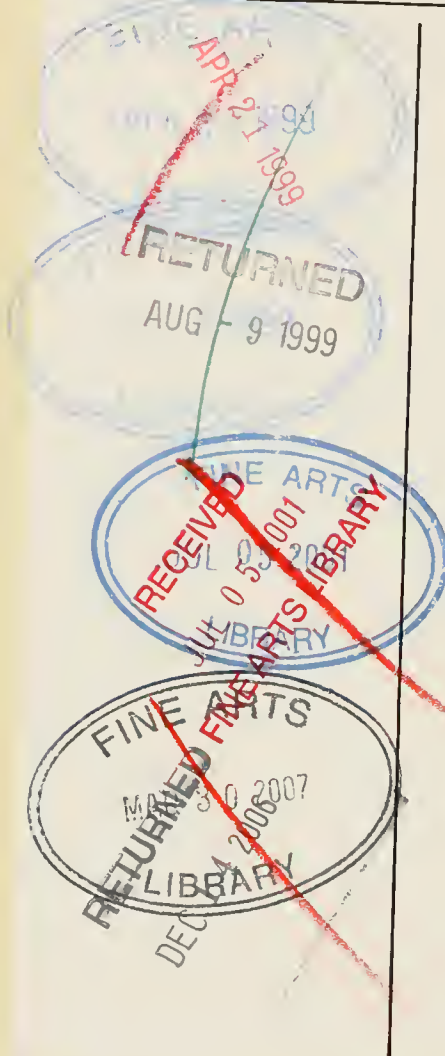


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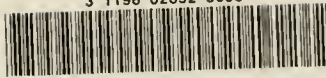


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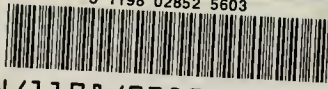
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